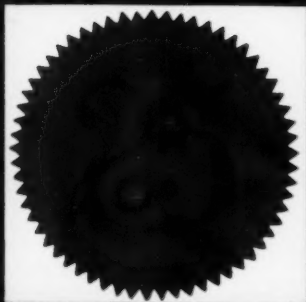


The American
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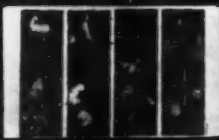
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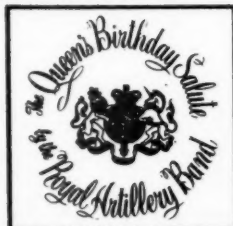


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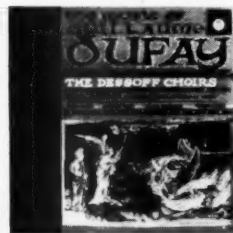
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ON THE COVER:

Pianists Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus, who
are collaborating this season in a series of recitals de-
voted to the four-hand music of Mozart and Schu-
bert. They will play at Carnegie Hall on January
7th, and later this month in Washington, D. C.,
Chicago, Winston-Salem, and Los Angeles. Their
latest Westminster recording is reviewed on page 341.

Mr. Franklin and Mr. Mozart

By HORACE ERVIN

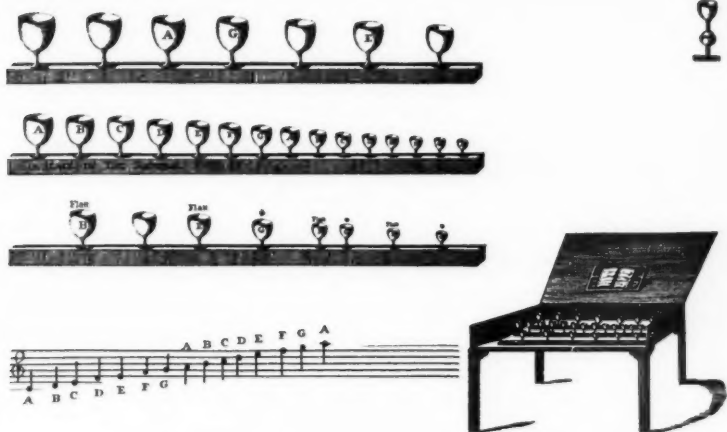
THE CENTURY of the American and French Revolutions produced great figures. Some it singled out for immortality. Among these were Wolfgang Mozart, composer, and Benjamin Franklin, musician and instrument-maker—two roles for which the latter is least known. January is the birthday month of both men.

Half a century separate their arrival on this planet but, because Franklin's eighty-four years elbowed their way al-

Benjamin Franklin at his armonica. From a painting by Alan Foster for "Etude" (1926). Courtesy Theodore Presser Co.

*two
immortals
—linked
in music*





By Miss FORD. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PLAYING ON THE MUSICAL GLASSES: SO THAT ANY PERSON, who has the least KNOWLEDGE of MUSIC, or a GOOD EAR, may be able to perform in a few Days, if not in a few Hours. WITH CLEAR AND PROPER DIRECTIONS HOW To provide a complete Set of WELL-TUNES GLASSES, at a very moderate Expence.

most to the end of the eighteenth century, he lived all but the last of the younger man's thirty-five. Two of the world's titans, they shared the ideals of the Enlightenment which—revolutionary then—proclaimed that freedom and natural rights belong to men in all stations. But it is only in the democracy of music that their names are linked.

In rural America, as it was when Franklin was born into it in 1706, there was no patronized music like that composed for the glittering courts of Europe. But Boston's Puritan homes had their simple tuneful kind. Franklin's father, a candle maker, was "skilled a little in music", and also played psalm tunes on his violin. Ben recorded in his autobiography. The son, the smell of tallow in his nostrils, played and sang and wrote Grub Street ballads like *Lighthouse Tragedy*, which was hawked on the streets of Boston. During his lifetime he played the harp, the violin, and the guitar (the instrument of the eighteenth century gentleman, which Franklin of the "middling classes" was to become).

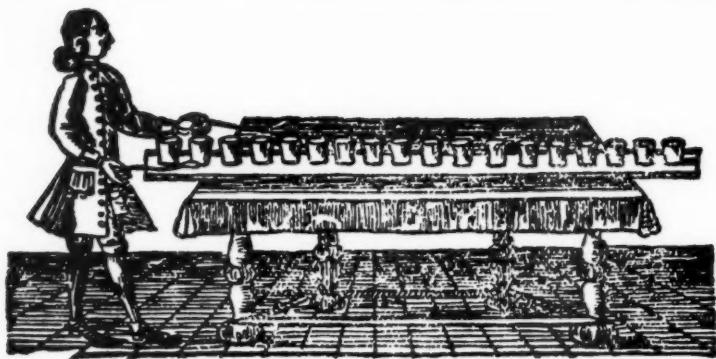
As orthodox in his esthetic attitudes as he was unorthodox in others, Franklin disapproved of the "modern music" being heard, and wrote that harmony is "only the coexistence of agreeable sounds". He

praised Scotch songs because they united melody and harmony "properly". He was also a composer of sorts, and a playfully written string quartet for three violins and cello, with the composer's name given as "**Benj. Francklin**", has turned up in the Paris Conservatory.

Franklin made success a hallmark. He ran a profitable job printing shop. He published *The Pennsylvania Gazette* and a chain of newspapers. *Poor Richard* came out for 25 years. Then there was the fireplace stove, which Franklin wouldn't patent because he wanted mankind to benefit freely. When just past forty, with barely half his years lived, he relinquished the reins of business to devote himself to other interests.

Many beckoned. He was deep in science. He had the Junto, America's first scientific society. There were civic matters—a better police force, a fire-fighting corps, street lamps, a hospital, a university, America's first public li-

Horace Ervin is a Philadelphia business executive whose workaday duties do not deter him from his avocational passions for listening to music and reading history—both of which are delightfully manifest in the accompanying article.



The French "verillons"—a board with eighteen glasses (c. 1738)

brary, the American Philosophical Society. He improved postal service and surprised the British Crown by turning in the first postal profit. The Indian raids busied him, and Braddock's Folly, and organizing a militia. But science was his grand passion. His kite showed that thunder wasn't Heaven's wrath but electricity's peal. He gave electricity the terms of value we use today—*positive*, *negative*. His lightning rod protected homes and churches. His experiments with heat told us it's more comfortable to wear white clothing in summer and black in winter. Then one day—about twenty years before the Declaration of Independence shook royal rooftops—Franklin boarded ship for England to air a grievance as Agent for Pennsylvania.

In London he found the Musical Glasses all the rage. These were simply drinking glasses filled with water in varying amounts, to give them different pitch. When tapped, they sounded notes. When moistened fingers caressed their rims, they gave off ethereal tones. "They sing like nightingales", the poet Thomas Gray rhapsodized.

A certain Miss Ford advertised lessons on the Glasses with hard-sell copy that would stand up against today's techniques: "Any Person, who has the least Knowledge of Music, or a good Ear," her advertisement read, "may be able to perform in a few days, if not in a few hours." Gluck, the promising German operatic composer, gave a concert at London's

Haymarket featuring a concerto for the Glasses. Sadler's Wells billed a Miss Wilkinson who performed as a "wire tap dancer and a player of the musical glasses". But it was a performer at Hamlin's Coffee House, a professional named Pockrich, who most whetted Franklin's curiosity.

Pockrich was an Irish adventurer who dabbled in many projects, according to the British historian A. Hyatt King, but many of them apparently were unsuccessful. At the Glasses—which had a long history in Europe and before that in Asia—he did better. Pockrich lined the Glasses in a row that could be tapped conveniently. He called the arrangement his "Angelick Organ". He liked to play Handel's *Water Music*. Then one day he was burned to death in a fire at the coffee house, and the Angelick Organ with him.

Franklin saw a set of Glasses at a friend's. Why, wondered Franklin the scientist, couldn't a better instrument be developed? Knowing how to work with his hands and being practical, Franklin the inventor turned thirty-seven glasses on their sides so that one overlapped the next. The variations in size gave the glasses different pitch, without having to use water. The difference in pitch gave Franklin his scale—of three octaves. A rod through the center of each glass connected at one end to a wheel. The wheel in turn was joined to a treadle under the player's feet, and this rotated the glasses, in the manner of a spinning jenny. The

player moistened his fingers, held them over the glass rims and produced beautiful sounds described as "soft and plaintive".

"I wished only to see the glasses disposed in a more convenient form," Franklin afterwards wrote an Italian scientist, "and brought together in a narrow compass so as to admit of a greater number of tones, and all within reach of hand to a person sitting before the instrument. . ."

Franklin called his invention the Armonica, "in honor of your musical language", he wrote the Italian friend, but the English soon pronounced it "Harmonica". Franklin's instrument should not be confused with the mouth organ that players grasp with cupped hands. That is the Aeolina, invented in 1829 by Sir Charles Wheatstone. Franklin's also was called the Glassychord and achieved wide fame on the Continent and especially in Germany as the Glass Harmonica.

Franklin wrote that "its tones are incomparably sweet beyond those of any other. . . they are swelled and softened at pleasure by stronger or weaker pressures of the finger, and continued to any length. . . the instrument being once tuned, never again wants tuning." A London manufacturer made armonicas for forty guineas. It was advertised as a "complete" instrument and "capable of a thorough bass and never out of tune". The *Bristol Journal* for January 12, 1762, gave more information:

"The celebrated glassychord invented by Mr. B. Franklin of Philadelphia; who has greatly improved the musical glasses, and formed them into a complete instrument to accompany the voice; capable of a thorough bass, and never out of tune. Miss Davies from London was to perform in the month of January, several favorite airs, English, Scotch and Italian, on the Glassy chord [*sic*] accompanied occasionally with the voice and German flute."

This was Marianne Davies, an English pianist, to whom Franklin gave an armonica as a present. With her sister Cecily, a singer, she toured the British Isles and sounded the armonica's celestial strains. In America, when Franklin came home, the armonica developed a vogue in

FOR DECADES the armonica has sat unplayed in homes and museums of America and Europe, an even more "forgotten" instrument than when it was on exhibition in 1862.

Vox has recorded the *Adagio and Rondo*, K. 617, with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra of Vienna. The armonica part is played on the celesta (PL-8550). An Audiophile recording (AP-22) features the Los Angeles String Quartet, with a harpsichordist playing the armonica part. Decca's Archive Series (ARC-3044) stars Bruno Hoffmann on his glass harp (an instrument developed independently of Franklin's, on the same principles). In France, Discophiles has a version (DF-164).

Mozart's solo piece, *Adagio for Glass Harmonica*, K. 617a, has been recorded by Biggs, organ (Columbia K31-231); by Gieseeking, piano (Angel D-35068); by Bruno Hoffmann, glass harp (Decca ARC-3044); and by Elisser, organ (M-G-M E-3075).

An edition of the *Adagio and Rondo*, with parts for all instruments, is published by International Music Company, New York. The armonica part is arranged for piano. Mercury Music Company, New York City, also lists an edition.

several cities. There were concerts in Philadelphia and New York. George Washington wrote in his diary he had heard a performance at Williamsburg. That was in 1765. Charleston, South Carolina, was the setting for "pot pourris on the Harmonia [*sic*] by Mrs. Pick".

Franklin played his instrument often, and frequently performed for others. One hearer, transported by the armonica's rapturous sounds, penned this poem and sent it to Franklin:

"Hark! the soft warblings, sounding
smooth and clear
Strike with celestial ravishment the
ear,
Conveying inward, as they sweetly
roll,
A tide of melting music to the soul;
And sure if aught of mortal moving
strain,
Can touch with joy the high angelic
train,
'Tis this enchanting instrument of
thine
Which speaks in accents more than
half divine."

(Continued on page 349)

(MOP)

From Pasquariello* to Don Pasquale

* *commedia dell'arte*

IN AMERICA—as in most parts of Europe—Italian comic opera is generally known only by a few masterworks like Rossini's "*Barber of Seville*" and Donizetti's "*Don Pasquale*". Other examples of this style, by these and such earlier composers as Pergolesi, Paisiello, and Cimarosa, are mere names to most operagoers. This large gap in the American repertory is due mainly to the very special vocal and histrionic demands of this most lively of all operatic genres. Most especially *opera buffa*, originally a reaction to the static *opera seria*, calls for vocal agility and witty, pointed acting more than for opulent voices and broad, emphatic gestures. This kind of vocal technique and this special acting ability are scarcely to be found outside of Italy. But even when an expert cast can be assembled, performances seldom come off properly in most of the opera theaters of this country: of all kinds of opera the *buffo* genre, with its stress on acting, is least suited to oversized auditoria, a theater with a capacity of about 1,000 seats being the ideal. Furthermore, much of the charm of comic opera lies in its fast-moving action, most of which takes place in long stretches of *secco*-recitatives meant to

Presently making his home in New York City, the author contributes music and ballet criticism to the *Algemeen Handelsblad* (Amsterdam) and meantime studies operatic stage direction at Juilliard.



"Love was the cause of it all!"—In "*Il Matrimonio Segreto*", the wretched Paolino listens as his friend the Count asks him to intercede with the father of Carolina. The Count wants to marry her, unaware that she is already married to Paolino.

—Beginning
a survey of
Italian comic
opera on LP

By BODO IGESZ

be understood by the audience. In order to create the necessary contact between the stage and a non-Italian audience the libretto requires translation, which generally means the loss of much of the sparkle of the original Italian.

Because the repertory of Italian comic opera on records has been considerably enlarged in recent years American music lovers may yet find their way to some of the most precious musical treasures of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Italy. In this case records, though only a substitute for the real theater experience, offer the opportunity of hearing Italy's best singers in this particular style. They of course perform in the original language, but the bilingual libretti which accompany most of these issues insure a full understanding of the often subtle humor. Because of this advantage, recordings of Italian comic operas can give many hours of perhaps unexpectedly rewarding listening pleasure.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, comic characters and comic scenes were regularly presented in serious operas. Only after Zeno and Metastasio had banished the comic element from the *opera seria* did the *commedia per musica* find, at first tentatively, a way of its own. Alessandro Scarlatti's "*Il Trionfo dell' Onore*" (1718) is the earliest comic opera still to be occasionally performed. He used comic scenes in his sixty-odd *opere serie* but this is his only full-fledged comic creation. To most listeners "*The Triumph of Honor*" will come as a great surprise. The action is based on the Don Juan theme and more than once there are re-

mindings of the atmosphere of Mozart's "*Don Giovanni*". In the score, infectiously comic numbers alternate with intensely moving moments. The highlights of the opera are the quartets at the end of the second and third acts—two ensembles of rare beauty. An unusual and charming touch is the casting of a mezzo-soprano in a soubrette part. In the Cetra recording the female soloists are more satisfactory than their male partners. Thanks to Giulini's expert conducting, however, the whole comes off extremely well.

But comic opera in Italy found its main glory in the *opera buffa*. This very special type of comic opera originated in the two-act intermezzi, performed as interludes, interspersed between the acts of the *opere serie*. The cast consisted of few characters, and their action was directly derived from the fixed traditions of the *commedia dell' arte*.

The most famous intermezzo is "*La Serva Padrona*", by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi. When first performed in 1733, between the acts of "*Il Prigionier Superbo*" by the same composer, this short and superficial comedy carried away the honors of the evening. In 1752 it started in Paris the famous "*Guerre des Bouffons*" [between adherents of French and Italian style]. After 225 years "*The Maid as Mistress*" still lives up to its glorious history. The simple, straightforward melodies enchant audiences today just as they did two centuries ago. Its two characters are drawn with an almost Mozartean subtlety. Arias like *Stizzoso, mio stizzoso* are often given all too serious performances on lieder recitals, but in their original con-

text they will come as a delightful surprise to many listeners. The Cetra recording seems to be the definitive one. Both Tuccari and Bruscantini give sparkling performances, admirably supported by the orchestra and conductor Simonetto. Angel's soloists are hardly suited to these *buffo* parts, but on Decca conductor Leitner gives the score an almost Handelian performance, and the imaginative accompaniment of the recitatives is an interesting feature of that disc.

The two other Pergolesi intermezzi to be found on LP, "*Il Maestro di Musica*" (1731) and "*La Contadina Astuta*" (1734), are both very enjoyable comedies, especially the latter. On recordings made so far, "*The Music-Master*", a delightful satire on the operatic life of its time, seems to be an unintentional satire on the vocal standards of our day. Of the three casts only Elisabeth Söderström, on Westminster, offers some pleasant singing. Westminster's, too, is the only recording to capture the *buffo* style, whereas both Allegro and London fight (in vain) the handicap of an English translation with not very imaginative vocalists. Period's recording of "*The Astute Village Girl*", sometimes referred to as "*Livietta e Tracollo*", will certainly meet with much more enthusiasm. The libretto of this gay intermezzo is hardly less brilliant than that of "*La Serva Padrona*", and the recording pleases especially because of Tuccari's attractive singing.

Soon the *buffo* style spread beyond the narrow bounds of the intermezzi, and full-

length *buffo* operas were composed and performed all over Italy. Consequently, *buffo* elements found their way into the *commedia per musica*, and it is this mixed form of comic opera that flourished until far into the nineteenth century and spread the fame of Italian opera throughout Europe.

Between 1750 and 1800 Piccinni, Paisiello, and Cimarosa stood out from numerous contemporaries. Unfortunately, Niccolò Piccinni is not yet represented on records, and "*Il Duello*" (1774) is the only opera by Giovanni Paisiello yet recorded.* This wonderfully lively score is a welcome addition to the small number of eighteenth-century operas in the LP catalogue. The sharp-tongued dialogue of this libretto makes the recitatives for once no less interesting than the Mozartean melodies of the vocal numbers. The Haydn Society has released a very worth-while record of this forgotten little opera. Soloists and conductor give an enthusiastic performance that makes us hope for more Paisiello soon.

The operas of Domenico Cimarosa certainly come much closer to the original *opera buffa* than those of his contemporaries. Sentiment, almost completely unknown in the intermezzi, then began to play an ever larger part in most comic operas, but Cimarosa remained remarkably free from this influence of the

*Bostonians know the Overture to Paisiello's "*Barber*", which is a special favorite of Pops conductor Arthur Fiedler. —Ed.



An opera within an opera: in the climactic scene of "*Le Cantatrici Villane*" Don Bucafo Zibaldone conducts a performance of his own "*Ezio*".

A selected discography of Italian comic opera

"Il Trionfo dell' Onore"	Cetra	1223
"La Serra Padrona"	Angel	35279/L
	Cetra	50036
	Decca	ARC-3039
"Il Maestro di Musica"	Allegro	35
	London	LL-291
	Westminster	18262
"La Contadina Astuta"	Period	592
"Il Duello"	Haydn Society	130
"Il Matrimonio Segreto"	Angel	3549-C/L
	Cetra	1214
"Il Maestro di Capella"	London	5194
	Vox	8450
"Le Cantatrici Villane"	Cetra	50.102

French *genre larmoyant*. That Cimarosa nevertheless was not entirely devoid of sentiment, and indeed could write very moving passages, is proved in Carolina's arioso *Come tacerlo poi* in the second act of "*Il Matrimonio Segreto*" (1792). Here Cimarosa reaches the emotional level of some of Mozart's most profound arias. "*The Secret Marriage*", the composer's most famous opera, is the only work among eighteenth-century comic operas still to be more than occasionally performed. A truly adequate performance is comparatively rare, to be sure, even in Italy. Cimarosa's enchanting melodies, transparent ensembles, and inventive instrumentation call for as much more polished musicianship as any Mozart opera. Cetra recorded excerpts from "*Matrimonio*" with the company of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, but happily the complete work has been issued by Angel with the cast of the opening performance at the Piccola Scala (Milan) in December of 1955. This is perhaps the most completely satisfying record made of a comic opera of this period. A nearly ideal team of singing actors, with the Piccola Scala orchestra conducted by Nino Sanzogno, give the score a spirited and imaginative performance. One objection to be made is the change in the original cast in the case of the mezzo-soprano. Stignani, replacing Simionato, is certainly not the right kind of singer for this repertory, although under the circumstances she

manages quite well. In sum, this is a priceless recording of a still too little known masterpiece.

Cimarosa, as court composer at various courts of Europe, often had to provide intermezzi for performances of *opere serie*. One of these is "*Il Maestro di Capella*", for basso-buffo, on the beloved subject of a conductor's having troubles with his orchestra. This cheerful and entertaining piece has commanded the attention of two record companies. Maugeri on Vox is good enough, but the laurel must go to Corena, undoubtedly the best buffo-singer of our day, for his superb performance on London. This disc features him also on the reverse side in arias by Mozart, Rossini, and Donizetti.

One of the last stage works under the direct influence of the *opera buffa* is "*Le Cantatrici Villane*" by the virtually unknown composer Valentino Fioravanti. This boisterous satire on *opera seria* was issued by Cetra. A charming heritage of the *commedia dell' arte* in this score is the Neapolitan dialect in which one of the characters expresses himself "*The Village Singers*" (who try to perform an *opera seria* on the village square with the strangest results) is given a most successful performance. This recording will give any opera lover much pleasure and some moments of hilarious fun.

To be concluded shortly



Conductor Craft checks a playback

New Directions in Music, Vol. I—

BOULEZ: *Le marteau sans maître* for alto voice and six instruments; **STOCKHAUSEN:** *Nr. 5 Zeitmasse* for five woodwinds; Margery MacKay (alto), Arthur Cleghorn (flute), Milton Thomas (viola), William Kraft (vibraphone), Dorothy Remsen (xyloimba), Theodore Norman (guitar), Walt Goodwin (percussion—bongos, maracas, tambourines, claves, bells, tam-tam, triangle, gong, cymbals, small cymbals), Donald Muggeridge (oboe), Donald Leake (English horn), Donald Christlieb (bassoon), and William Ulyate (clarinet), conducted by Robert Craft. Columbia ML-5275, \$4.98.

BOULEZ: *Le marteau sans maître* for alto voice and six instruments; **MES-SAÏEN:** *Oiseaux exotiques* for piano and orchestra; respectively Marie-Thérèse Cahn (alto) with an unidentified ensemble conducted by Pierre Boulez, and Yvonne Loriod (piano) with an unidentified orchestra conducted by Rudolf Albert. Westminster WXXN-18746, \$4.98.

After Webern, Who?

*The first
American
recordings of
Boulez and
Stockhausen*

NOTE: For the information of students and other interested listeners, study scores of both the Boulez (UE-12652) and the Stockhausen (UE-12697) are available in the Universal Edition through Associated Music Publishers, New York City. The list prices are \$6 and \$12, respectively.

THE FIRST recordings of works by Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen, two among the most advanced European composers of the younger generation, must be considered a major musical event. For this we must be grateful to Columbia, which is the only recording company to sample systematically the mainstream of present-day musical creativity—and also to Westminster for introducing us to Boulez as a conductor of his own music.

Before going into details about the works recorded here, I want to call attention to a state of affairs in America and especially in New York (which considers itself the world's musical capital), that is as strange as it is sad. Since the war a new generation of young composers has arisen in Europe. Starting out from late Webern they developed new techniques and invented new means of expression. While they were considered at first mere experimenters, the quality of their works and the seriousness of their approach resulted in their being considered more and more the leading forces in Europe's creative musical life. For some years now, one has encountered their names regularly at the concerts presented by radio orchestras and at the various festivals of contemporary music in Germany and elsewhere. Their place is similar to that occupied in the 1920s by Schönberg, Stravinsky, Bartók, Milhaud, Berg, etc. In this country, however, complete ignorance of these new trends and their initiators is usual. No performer, no concert organizer, has taken it upon himself to offer these new musical developments to an average audience. Ten years of European music is thus totally unknown to our concert halls. And this applies not only to European composers but also to those American ones who have been following the same advanced trends; they simply have not been given a chance to be heard.

This is why we cannot praise enough the continuing initiative of Columbia Records and the enthusiasm of conductor Robert Craft for having opened the door on recent European trends. Apparently the phonograph record is at present the only means through which the existing gap between the *avant-garde* composer and his potential audience can be narrowed.

The principal European composers of the new generation are Pierre Boulez in France, Karlheinz Stockhausen in Germany, and Luigi Nono in Italy. (I will leave the latter out of this discussion, none of his works having been recorded here.) They are young still; Boulez is thirty-three and Stockhausen thirty. They matured after the war, and for them the Schönbergian twelve-tone technique is the most natural of phenomena. In fact we can stop using the term "twelve-tone" when speaking of these composers, just as one never mentions the tempered system as such in connection with Mozart, Beethoven, or Brahms. Boulez and Stockhausen have in common that their point of departure is the music of Webern, and more specifically its sonic, rhythmic, and structural originality. Both, at the very beginning of their careers, became aware that the serial technique as applied by Schönberg to both melody and harmony was structurally insufficient and that, in order to create total organic logic, serial organization had to be applied to *all* the elements of music including rhythm, sound, and intensity.

The results of this novel approach are elaborately described by Robert Craft in his excellent notes accompanying the present disc, and in the course of this review I can only point toward the most important ones. To start with, the sheer speed of Boulez' *Le marteau*, both in the fast and the slower movements, is much greater than in any music of any earlier period. This explains why the work is largely treble in sound, why everything

moves at such high pitch. The serial technique as practiced by Schönberg has been intensified to an extreme degree by both composers. Where Schönberg combined the transpositions and orders of a basic horizontal series horizontally and, in groups or segments of itself, vertically, Boulez begins with vertical serial units which are not, as Schönberg's were, merely telescoped horizontal ones. He can vary them by transposing them on themselves and to the same number of degrees (changing the density, that is) as the horizontal series. Also, as I have said above, Boulez and Stockhausen use rhythmic series, dynamic series, serial distribution of timbres, and serial densities.

Pitch, considered as a pure element, loses some of its independent value in this new music in the same way that melody, for example, is not the predominant factor in Stravinsky's music. Other serial conditions—the special dynamics, the frequency, the articulation, the timbre—tend by association to reduce the supremacy of the pitch element.

In the realm of rhythm, both composers exceed anything that has been done before. They serially equate units of five, six, seven, eight, and nine with the usual twos, threes, and fours, and even this new range is extended by indicating that a group of notes be played "in the time of" some other unit, such as "six notes in the time of five". From this

viewpoint both composers are extremely complex, Stockhausen more so due to his polyphonic use of different tempo markings, to his sometimes combining *accelerando* and *ritardando*, and in general to the loss of any sense of beat, often still perceivable in the music of Boulez.

Finally, even expression marks and loudness itself are subject to serial rotation in the new music, which amounts to a dynamic distinction for almost every note. Obviously, this effect is virtually impossible to achieve in a recording, no matter how "hi" its "fi".

The question remains: What is the audible result? And what does all this mean esthetically?

I first became acquainted with Boulez' *Le marteau* something over a year ago, when I got hold of a French recording conducted by the composer himself.* At first hearing, and quite aside from the technical complexities of the work, I was astounded at its intrinsic beauty. This was definitely no exercise in compositional tricks; neither was it an experiment. After I had listened several times the following became apparent: Structurally, this younger generation expresses itself in terms of poetry, not prose. To be sure, this would apply also to most of the extant Webern, and also to the latest works of Stravinsky and Dallapiccola. All it means is that one has to approach this music as one does the reading of poetry. But what this means in turn is that the di-

*This Vega release, issued in America by Westminster, is reviewed herewith.



Stockhausen, with pipe, chatting with Nono in the festival city of Donaueschingen. (Photo by G. W. Baruch)



Pierre Boulez at home
(Photo by Schapowalow)

mensions in music have changed, that Boulez has succeeded in "splitting the atom" made up of traditional melody, rhythm, and intensity.

Le marteau sans maître consists of nine movements, four of which (Nos. 3, 5, 6, and 9) use the voice on surrealist poems by René Char. The whole work is structurally interrelated and the voice itself is not only a formal device but also part of the sonic organization. In fact, Boulez uses it in the most novel manner, sometimes without apparent continuity, sometimes writing longer phrases on a single syllable, and in the last movement by having it repeat a short refrain-like phrase with closed mouth. The work is striking for its extreme refinement, its breath-taking sonic invention, its inner logic, and its atmosphere of urgency—which one can feel without being aware of the structural complexities.

Stockhausen's *Zeitmasse* is quite another matter. Certainly it is much more difficult to absorb. Even at first hearing, however, it is clear that this is music of great intellectual power. In a sense it uses the same devices that Boulez does, but the result is totally different. Craft suggests in his notes that electronic music may be the chief influence. Another factor may be that Boulez is French and Stockhausen is German, for this difference in national origin shows very much in the character of their music. Those who are interested in technical details are

referred to the detailed analysis of Stockhausen's originality by the able annotator.

When it comes to discussing the quality of the performances, one cannot help but be numb in the presence of what has been accomplished by Craft and the brilliant performers under him. Special mention must be made of the vocal soloist, Margery MacKay, who achieves miracles in the Boulez work. Craft seems to have totally identified himself with this music, and his interpretations are both meticulous and deeply felt. The sound is beautifully realistic.

That a work like Boulez' *Marteau sans maître* should be all at once represented by two versions is incredible enough. That so closely calculated and carefully indicated a score could receive two quite different and valid interpretations is even more astonishing. Westminster's version, conducted by the composer, has the benefit of authenticity. Yet I must say that Craft is technically more precise, and his performance is better defined as to instrumental balances. It also has a much better vocalist. Boulez, on the other hand, conducts his work with more poetic feeling. Messiaen's *Oiseaux exotiques*, notable as it may well be for its rhythmic and sonic invention (it imitates the sound of more than forty species of birds), is on the whole disappointing. It lacks structure and urgency, and after a while becomes too repetitious to sustain interest.

FROM THE EDITOR:

I AM a provincial myself (b. Peabody, Mass.), and therefore expected to be awed by the sophistication of New Yorkers. But I am not because I have many times seen that concertgoers in the big city are in fact a hayseed lot for all the chi-chi of their rituals. Some years ago in Carnegie Hall, for instance, I saw a Philharmonic subscription audience rise to disperse before the last piece on the program even had started—Debussy's *Images* were to be followed by Ravel's *Alborada del gracioso*, but so thunderous was the applause after *Iberia* that Dimitri Mitropoulos stepped down for a few moments before resuming with the *Rondes de printemps*. After this he retired, and when he returned to the podium the house was fast emptying. The conductor had to shout at the departing droves: "Please, please. . . is not over!" Remembering this fiasco, which was not chronicled in the daily press because the critics had left at intermission, I was not too surprised to find something under a hundred interested parties at Town Hall for the New York première of Bartók's First Piano Concerto on a Sunday afternoon in mid-December. True, there was a newspaper strike, but the event *had* been announced long since. I am thus forced to conclude that Manhattan is not so musical as it likes to believe, especially when I discover that Koussevitzky introduced this Concerto to conservative Boston back in the twenties. Soon it will be available on LP, and we shall see. Bartók Records has taped a performance with a first-class pickup orchestra and pianist Leonid Hambro. . . The same artist, by the way, has just joined the roster of Kapp Records, and I get the impression that this enterprising label is about to expand its "classical" department (nominations for another adjective are still open). For one thing, Kapp has absorbed the small but select Unicorn catalogue. And I am amused to note that for all the maledictions heaped on Kapp for its "Opera Without Words" series, no less than three formidable competitors have brought out a similar

line. . . Audiophiles within commuting distance of New York should be at Carnegie Recital Hall on the evening of January 10th to hear the Fine Arts Quartet play alternately "live" and via its own pre-recorded stereo tapes "without missing a beat" if the advance publicity is to be credited. The concert, as I suppose it must be called, will be sponsored by Acoustic Research, Dynaco, and Concertapes. Larry Zide will report on it, but probably not until the March issue because deadlines are being moved up. . . On the 25th there are to be two events worth anyone's attention. Our own I. K. will offer a harpsichord recital over WNYC, New York, and coast to coast Leonard Bernstein will conduct the second in his new series of CBS telecasts with the New York Philharmonic. Lincoln motor cars may have achieved the lowest low in the history of television commercials on the first of these shows a month or so ago, but a sponsor is entitled to waste his time as he sees fit and I am deeply grateful to Lincoln for having had the good sense to give all but a few minutes of its expensive hour to Lenny. If more Lincolns are sold, Beethoven will have done it, not that society snoop's spouse who got in the way of the music so obnoxiously. . . We gave the most careful thought to our annual "Critics' Choice" listing, due this month, and decided that it must be useless to many of you no matter how it is compiled. Consequently, it is being skipped this year. To collectors who own good basic libraries, previously unrecorded works and esoterica would be the outstanding records of the season. To those who are just starting, standard repertory is usually more important, and the ideal recorded performances of these familiar masterworks often are not the latest ones. So that the "bests" of 1958 would be misleading to all, if not meaningless. . . I might mention here that numerous subscribers (and some advertisers) have asked that we star or otherwise grade reviews. Sorry, we don't and we won't. Hieroglyphics is not criticism. —J.L.



Robert Bell, assembly foreman at AR

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ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC. 24 Thorndike St., Cambridge 41, Mass.

January, 1959

Record Reviews

(including stereo)

THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Cowper

J. S. BACH: *Mass in B minor*; Lois Marshall (soprano); Hertha Töpfer (contralto); Peter Pears (tenor); Hans Braun (baritone); Kim Borg (basso); Bavarian Radio Chorus and Orchestra, conducted by Eugen Jochum. Epic set SC-6027, four sides, \$7.96.

▲THE novel feature of this recording is the use of the new edition of Bach's works. Listeners who follow the records with the standard score may be nonplussed by what goes on in the *Et in unum Dominum*. It seems that Bach thought twice about the vocal lines in this duet and finally returned to his original version. But only now, it seems, are his final intentions respected. Otherwise this performance is so good that I wish it were better. Jochum obviously knows his business, and he has choral and orchestral forces admirably trained to do his will. I do not always agree with him in matters of tempo, but this is a question of taste. Even so, while Jochum takes the first *Kyrie* at a more or less traditional pace, there is less spark in his performance than in the almost incredibly slow pacing of Scherchen. Generally Jochum seems to be on the fast side, though as the work progresses I find myself with less and less objection. It is the vocal soloists who are really disap-

pointing. Lois Marshall's voice has received much merited praise in the few years she has been singing professionally, and she sounds well here if not particularly thrilling. Hertha Töpfer, however, is sloppy in her part of the first duet, and a good deal of the time she is unsteady and indefinite as to pitch. Pears is well known as a versatile and routinized singer, but his singing here is rather stiff. Kim Borg sings the *Quoniam* acceptably if not too steadily. Hans Braun does well, however, with *Et in spiritum sanctum*.

—P L.M.

■
J. S. BACH: *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*; *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor*; *Prelude and Fugue in A minor*; *Prelude and Fugue in E minor*; Carl Weinrich (organ). Westminster Stereo WST-14043, \$5.98.

▲HOW can one justify performances such as these? Can any such justification have a valid musicological basis? I simply cannot think of Bach as so brutally cold a person as this record suggests. In the hands (and feet) of Weinrich the organ is a piece of machinery. His registrations, his tempi, his whole approach is icily inflexible. The short E minor Prelude as presented here, for instance, is ludicrous:

the tempo far too fast, the registrations thin and squeaky. Half the time Weinrich seems to be striving for a harpsichord-like sound. This is particularly noticeable in the Passacaglia and Fugue which, incidentally, is so far from Bach's grandiose conception as to be almost unrecognizable. Both the D minor Toccata and Fugue and the A minor Prelude and Fugue are hindered by overly reedy registrations. The D minor Toccata in particular suffers from so many eccentricities which are blatantly at variance with the score that I just cannot take the performance seriously; it strikes me as a travesty. Honors must be heaped on Westminster's engineers for their marvelous work in capturing the sound of the (Swedish) organ with such fine clarity and balance.

—P.C.P.

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonata No. 29 in B flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier");* Egon Petri (piano). Westminster WWN-18747, \$4.98.

Schnabel RCA Victor LM-2155
Backhaus London LL-602
Kempff Decca DL-9579

▲IN his 70s the great Petri remains a musician of high purpose who has suffered no curtailment of his manual dexterity and disciplined assertiveness. Though the present reading sets a high mark it is not without its faults. These are mainly confined to the last movement, whose *allegro*, a section rather mathematically conceived, does not seem the place to invoke a broad rubato. Throughout the following *presto-prestissimo* development, the pedal is excessively utilized at the expense of clarity and structural logic. The opening movements are well realized. Westminster's reproduction is of high quality.

—A.K.

BERLIOZ: *"The Damnation of Faust": Hungarian March; Dance of the Sylphs; Minuet of the Will-o'-the-Wisps; "Romeo and Juliet": Romeo alone, Melancholia, Concert and Ball, Feast of the Capulets; Scène d'amour; Queen Mab Scherzo;* Paris Opéra Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens. Angel 35431, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

(*"Damnation of Faust"*)
Munch, Boston (complete) . . . RCA Victor LM-6114

Monteux, San Francisco
(March only) RCA Camden CAL-385
(*"Romeo and Juliet"*)
Toscanini, NBC

(excerpts) . . . RCA Victor LM-6026 and LM-1019

▲AFTER listening to many Cluytens performances, on records and at Carnegie Hall, one conclusion about his interpretative personality is inescapable: his responses are almost invariably lyric rather than dramatic. The lines of a work are usually softer under his direction, its frame of narrower dimensions. He is not predisposed to emotional music. In such numbers as the *Dance of the Sylphs* and the *Minuet of the Will-o'-the-Wisps* the Cluytens approach meets with considerable success. The grace of the softly elegant waltz and the wit of the syncopated minuet are deftly realized. The *Rákóczy March*, however, suffers from understatement. The *"Romeo and Juliet"* excerpts find Cluytens at his worst, for this is music that demands an intensity and passion that Cluytens does not give it. The pastel results cannot compare with the recordings by Toscanini and Mitropoulos (now withdrawn). The sound is the best yet from an Angel performance of French origin.

—A.K.

BERLIOZ: *Harold In Italy, Op. 16;*

William Primrose (viola), Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. RCA Victor Stereo LSC-2228, \$5.98.

▲THE performance is clean-cut and straightforward, by turns vigorously spirited and gently poignant. Victor's sound is sturdy and robust, although ever so slightly steely at times. The stereo illusion is excellent.

—P.C.P.

BERLIOZ: *Symphonic fantastique, Op. 14;* Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. Capitol-EMI G-7102, \$4.98.

Monteux, San Francisco . . . RCA Victor LM-1131

▲AFTER several hearings I still find it difficult to believe that movements four and five on this disc are from the same performance, or that they are even conducted by the same person. The first two movements in particular bristle with almost exactly the same kind of organization, intensity, and excitement that made

the old LP reading by Monteux so fabulous, and as yet without peer. The calls and answers by the English horn and oboe in the third movement are rendered with poignant beauty; the remaining development is a poetically spun love story. But then the *March to the Scaffold* is as matter-of-factly unfolded as the others were taut with meaning, and the final *Witches' Sabbath* suggests that the ladies were brewing tea. How a concept that set out with such fervor could dwindle to such a commonplace thing is more than I can understand. The reproduction is unclear, unbalanced, bass-heavy, and thin and wiry in the trebles. David Drew's liner notes are pedantic, and at times hilariously (as in the "intense desolation of the clarinets' drooping thirds") misguided.

—A.K.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68*; Symphony Orchestra of the Southwest German Radio, Baden-Baden, conducted by Jascha Horenstein. Vox Stereo ST-PL 10.690, \$5.95

▲THERE is not much to recommend this performance, which is wanting in both dramatic impact and clarity of detail. The orchestra is coarse in tone and lacks precision. Vox's sound is, by turns, either thick and musty or rough and strained.

—P.C.P.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98*; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. Capitol-EMI G-7100, \$4.98.

Toscanini, NBC, RCA Victor LM-1713

▲KEMPE'S reading is a middle-of-the-

road, "let the music speak for itself" concept. It cannot be called a great performance, nor one of deep penetration, but neither can it be termed inadequate nor shallow. Its most assertive moments come in the fourth movement, even though the opening theme and its repetition are rather irresolutely stated. In all, a competent delivery, skillfully recorded.

—A.K.

BRAHMS: *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24*; *Three Intermezzi, Op. 117*; Eugene Istomin (piano). Columbia ML-5287, \$4.98.

BRAHMS: *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24*; *Rhapsody in B minor, Op. 79, No. 1*; *Rhapsody in G minor, Op. 79, No. 2*; *Rhapsody in E flat, Op. 119, No. 4*; Sylvia Zaremba (piano). Unicorn UNLP-1058, \$3.98.

▲BOTH are highly discerning presentations of Brahms' challenging Variations, but a greater logic in organization, a generally subtler dynamic vocabulary, and a far superior reproduction makes Istomin's the more arresting musical experience. Miss Zaremba's concept, however, cannot be easily dismissed. Her tonal power and her control of it are such that any man could well envy. In her capable hands such variations as Nos. 4, 15, 16, and 17, as well as the fugue, are excitingly conveyed. Her keen feeling and delicate ability to shade (not always applied) draw sensitive color from Nos. 1, 5, 21, and 22. The unique character of Nos. 10 and 13 is skillfully projected. Istomin in most cases (Variations 10 and 13 being exceptions) matches these superior efforts, while in others (notably Nos. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 19, and 20), through more judiciously chosen tempi and greater flexibility, he brings more effectively knit relationships of harmonies, counterpoints, and phrasings. His delicate use of rubato and expert utilization of color add considerably to his excellence. And both pianists verify their abundant ability as Brahms interpreters in the shorter pieces. The final band of side one of the Unicorn record is, as listed, devoted to the Handel theme. Only the Variations and Fugue are billed on the reverse, but the theme is

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erroneously repeated at the outset. The reproductive ills of this release include a clangorous stridency in louder moments, a boomy bass, general lack of clarity (particularly in softer passages), and an unrealistic piano sound. On the Columbia disc the longer work, which is an expertly remastered reissue (from the old ten-inch series), is surprisingly better recorded than the Intermezzi.

—A.K.

■
CIMAROSA: *32 Sonatas for Harpsichord*; Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpsichord). Westminster XWN-18698, \$4.98.

▲VEYRON-LACROIX seems to be sharing with Fernando Valenti the role of Westminster's house harpsichordist, analagous to Ruggero Gerlin on the late and much lamented L'Oiseau-Lyre label. The benefit of this is revealed in this release. Here on one disc is more than one hour and five minutes of music of unusual interest. This interest is two-fold. In the first place, this is highly successful music, purely as music. While these thirty-two sonatas will never earn Cimarosa (better known for his operas anyway) the rank of a supreme musical genius, they are all the same delightful, lively, and thoroughly charming pieces. In the second place, they are most interesting historically, and especially to anyone interested in the development of the keyboard sonata. For Cimarosa (1749-1801) the prime influence, it goes almost without saying, was still Domenico Scarlatti, who died in 1757 when Cimarosa was only a boy. Ever so many of these sonatas could easily have come from the pen of this Italian whose greatest creative activities had their setting in Spain but whose influence was still felt in his native land as long after his death as 1789, the year these pieces were composed. Thus it is altogether fitting that the performer plays them on the harpsichord instead of making the mistake of spoiling their decidedly mid-eighteenth-century spirit by translating them to the less appropriate piano. And yet, in spite of the truth of this, some of the pieces do not escape the influence of the Austro-German development of the sonata. Traces of Mozart appear frequently, and pieces like Nos. 4, 10, 27, 28,

and especially 21 (in "sonata-form") sound strikingly like the sort of music Cimarosa's younger contemporary was writing for the increasingly popular pianoforte. These sonatas are thus a demonstration of the persistence of an older style, but with distinct foretastes of a newer one. Sometimes it is quite an amusing game to listen to one after another and try to decide which style is winning. Of incidental interest, by the way, is the fact (strangely unmentioned in the jacket notes) that Nos. 29, 31, and 24, in that order, are the pieces that Arthur Benjamin arranged into a three-movement oboe concerto of which there have been three LP recordings (Mercury MG-10033, now deleted; Angel 35255; and Vanguard VRS-1025). M. Veyron-Lacroix is an exceedingly fine interpreter of these sonatas, capturing all the various shades of delicacy, sprightliness, pensiveness, and charm. And Westminster's engineers have given him their fullest co-operation. Highly recommended.

—J.W.B.

●
COPLAND: *Suite from "Billy the Kid"; "Rodeo"* (excerpts); Morton Gould and his orchestra; RCA Victor LM-2195, \$4.98.

COPLAND: *Four Dance Episodes from "Rodeo"; El Salón México; Danzon Cubano*; Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury MG-50172, \$4.98.

(*Billy the Kid*)
Ormandy, Phila. Columbia ML-5157
(*El Salon Mexico*)
Koussevitzky, Boston RCA Victor LCT-1134

▲THOUGH neither recording has quite the spontaneity and biting zest that filled Bernstein's recently withdrawn reading of *Billy the Kid*, Gould's crisp handling of the *allegros* in both suites comes very close. Moreover, his ability to project the intimate stillnesses and the atmospheric sonorities so idiomatic to the Americana of Copland makes for especially effective contrast. The gun battle in *Billy* defies betterment. Each side of the new RCA Victor disc contains a bonus (over and above the usual concert excerpts) drawn from the complete ballet. From *Billy* it is the pensively moving

Waltz; from *Rodeo* a deliciously tawdry rendition of the honky-tonk music on as delightfully flat an instrument as I've ever heard. The sonic values of the record match the musical ones. Dorati's accounts seem to stress the symphonic aspects of the orchestrations to the detriment of color, rhythm, and (to a lesser degree) dynamics. The moods in all three works tend to be restrained, the humor rather contrived. The dry strings and close-up reproduction are perfect for the "Hoe-down" in *Rodeo*, however. —A.K.

DEBUSSY: *La Mer, Iberia*; Orchestre du Théâtre de l'Opéra de Paris conducted by Manuel Rosenthal. Westminster XWN-18770, \$4.98, or Stereo WST-14020, \$5.98.

▲ROSENTHAL'S performances are quite acceptable in a competitive field. Cleanly and carefully articulated, these readings succeed in evoking a substantial amount of the proper atmospheric quality. Westminster's sound exploits all the possibilities of this ideally stereophonic music. —P.C.P.

Four contrasting views of the 'New World'

DVOŘÁK: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World")*; Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. RCA Victor LM-2214, \$4.98.

The Same: Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Constantin Silvestri. Angel 35623, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

The Same: Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Capitol P-8454, \$4.98

Toscanini, NBC.....RCA Victor LM-1778
Kubelik, Vienna Phil.....London LL-1607

▲THOUGH each performance has distinct individuality, the three conductors share remarkably similar views on this work. All the versions are keenly felt, animated, and highly effective. Reiner's is the most tightly-woven reading; he follows the score to the letter except for an unmarked ritard during the last three bars of the introduction. The incandescence of instrumentation and secondary voices that we have come to expect in his interpretations is very much present. He spins the English horn theme of the second movement's opening with moving simplicity, but later misses the humor in the play of sixteenth-note triplet figurations by the oboe and clarinet. Silvestri's disconcerting habit of distorting rhythms, phrasings, and tempi is happily evidenced only to the extent of a slight but unannoying accelerando in the opening movement and a curious (and very annoying) way of rushing the meter of the last half of each bar of the second movement's

English horn theme and its later variant in the strings, thus sacrificing the requisite simplicity. The inserted accelerando in the final movement prevents clear articulation of the triplet figurations of the second theme and its repeat. By and large, however, Silvestri's statement hews to the score. He, too, brings considerable illumination to inner voices and a sincere feeling over-all. The pensive opening of Leinsdorf's presentation seems to set the mood for what is to come. Scattered throughout his performance are moments of deep russet coloration in contrast to the brighter hues preferred by Silvestri and Reiner. Tempi here are standard, though phrasings tend to have a greater fluidity. Pensiveness is disdained at the close, however, for a rousing and decidedly unmarked accelerando. Reiner's is the best orchestra, but the others perform with spirit and fine tone too. The RCA Victor disc also is the best recorded. The Angel release is a mite too reverberant, the Capitol rather muddled. —A.K.

DVOŘÁK: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor ("From the New World")*; Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. Vox Stereo ST-PL10.810, \$5.95

▲ONE of this work's most endearing qualities, I have always felt, is an expansive sort of buoyancy. This trait is largely missing here. Hollreiser's reading is for me ponderous and lacking in spirit, although the *Largo* does come off quite well. Vox's coarse sound is not very exciting, either. —P.C.P.

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FRANCK: *Mass in A, Op. 12*; Theresa Vettel (soprano); Edward Kabacinsky (tenor); John Wilton (bass-baritone); Allen J. Sever (organ); Stephanie Rappa (harp); Kenneth Pinckney (cello), and The Welch Chorale conducted by James B. Welch. Lyricord LL-70, \$4.98.

▲THE chief claim to fame of César Franck's Mass is that the popular *Panis angelicus* is taken from it. Even this is a happen-so, for actually *Panis* was interpolated into the Mass at the suggestion of the publisher some twelve years after the work was written. It seems odd that so religious and orthodox a man as Franck, and one who spent so much of his life in the organ loft, should have done so little for sacred music. Only *The Beatitudes* stands up as a major choral work, though of course *Psalm CL* remains a staple in the choir repertory. It has been suggested that Franck never thoroughly mastered the choral idiom because he had no models; there was no living tradition of French sacred music in his day. This Mass

is built very largely of square blocks. "Full of inequalities," wrote Franck's devoted disciple Vincent d'Indy, "the Mass, like all Franck's church music, is a curious dream, half mystic, half secular, in which the flow of ecstatic sentiment is sometimes complete and superb, and sometimes interrupted by rhythms and affectations which are essentially theatrical." But though this may not be consistently great music, it is decidedly practical for performance in church. The Welch Chorale, which is also the choir of the Church of St. Philip Neri in the Bronx (New York City), quite possibly has it in its regular repertory. And that is the kind of performance they give us. Some may find that the organ is too strong in the recording, and certainly it does more than support the choir. But if this is a fault it is a good one. For myself I like to hear it this way. The additional harp and cello parts called for in Franck's score are in quite capable hands. The engineering is up to the high standard set earlier by this enterprising firm. —P.L.M.

A new soprano from Norway

By PHILIP L. MILLER

THE critic Henry T. Finck, in his *Songs and Song Writers* (1900), which remains a limited, exasperating, and sometimes rewarding book, ranks Grieg as second to Schubert "among all the song writers". But Finck based his study on the Peters Edition, which is to say that like practically every non-Scandinavian until quite recently who knew Grieg's songs at all, he knew them in hopelessly inadequate German translations, or sometimes even worse, English versions based upon the German. Astra Desmond, who contributes the chapter on the songs to Gerald Abraham's *Grieg, A Symposium* (1948), has a good deal to say on this point. "It is a tribute to the musical worth of his songs," she writes, "that in spite of...bad translations a handful of them have achieved worldwide popularity."

The fact that in the past few years we have come to a better understanding of Grieg as a song writer is due to the emergence of a number of great Scandinavian singers. Those who do not have northern

blood in their veins do well not to sing in Norwegian, for the kaleidoscopic colors of the language are more readily experienced than emulated. But artists of the calibre of Frijsh and Norena had developed a taste in some of us before the success of Flagstad and Bjoerling brought the real Grieg to larger audiences. Nor should the fine recordings of Miss Desmond be forgotten, though they have not been transferred to LP.

Thus it is appropriate that Miss Loevberg should make her recording debut with nine of the best known Grieg songs. The opening number is a real old favorite. "Can anyone", rhapsodizes Finck, "hear that exquisite song, *The First Primrose*, without being moved by a thrill of delight like that which must be felt by a naturalist when he first comes across a bird of paradise, with its gorgeous plumage so different in pattern and coloring from that of all other birds? When I first heard it, I was affected as I was when I saw my first Mariposa Lily in California..." It is a long way from this fresh little spring song to the broad melody of *Monte Pincio*, that masterly setting of a Björnson poem with its prophecy of a new Italy. Appropriately after this we return to Norway with the haunting *Ved Rundarne* (known in our German-English editions as *Auf der Reise zur Heimath, or Homeward*) and that little masterpiece, *The First Meeting*. The group ends quietly with one of the most famous and one of the subtlest of all, *A Swan*. Miss Desmond's chapter is recommended reading for anyone interested in this program, especially for what she has to say about the impossibility of translating this particular song.

It will probably be the misfortune of every gifted Norwegian soprano for many years to come to be hailed as "the second Flagstad". I am glad to report that there

GRIEG: *Med en primula veris*, Op. 26, no. 4; *Hytten*, Op. 18, vol. 2, no. 3; *Ragnhild*, Op. 44, no. 3; *Lys nat*, Op. 70, no. 3; *Fra Monte Pincio*, Op. 39, no. 1; *Ved Rundarne*, Op. 33, vol. 2, no. 3; *Det forste mode*, Op. 21, no. 1; *Millom rosor*, Op. 39, no. 4; *En svane*, Op. 25, no. 2; **R. STRAUSS:** *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, Op. 29, no. 1; *Ich liebe dich*, Op. 37, no. 2; *Zueignung*, Op. 10, no. 1; *Cécilie*, Op. 27, no. 2; *Du meines Herzens Krönlein*, Op. 21, no. 2; *Meinem Kinde*, Op. 37, no. 3; *Allerseelen*, Op. 10, no. 8; *Befreit*, Op. 39, no. 4; Aase Nordmo Loevberg (soprano); Robert Legin (Grieg) and Gerald Moore (Strauss). Angel 35590, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

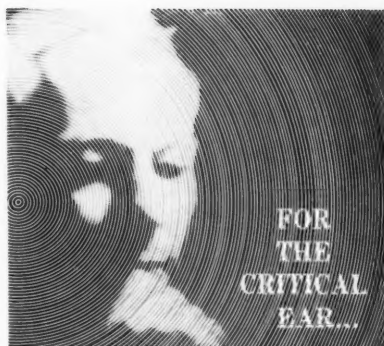
is no such accolade in the literature accompanying this disc, though Miss Loevberg has not escaped it. Actually she is little like her great compatriot. I do not get the impression from this recording that the voice is a big one. But singing in Norwegian she does color her tones somewhat in the familiar Flagstad manner, and she has a curious way of thinning the quality just about as she gets to the top of the staff, and this Flagstad also used to do.

Like any Norwegian, Loevberg sings Grieg *con amore*. She is an interesting singer and she holds the attention easily throughout the first record side. It is in the Strauss that her real weaknesses show up. She starts quite beautifully with *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, making a lovely effect with a very gradual slowing up as she sings *Ich gehe nicht schnell, ich eile nicht*. But the rest of her program is not well chosen. Neither the voice nor the style is big enough for *Ich liebe dich*, and *Zueignung* is sung with great reserve but no ecstasy. While I approve of keeping *Allerseelen* on a low dynamic level, I would like more intensity in it than I find here. Having said as much, I need not even indicate where *Befreit* falls short. It will be interesting to hear Miss Loevberg in opera.

•
GRIEG: *Piano Concerto in A minor*;
RACHMANINOFF: *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*; Leonard Pennario (piano); Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Capitol Stereo SP-8441, \$5.98.

▲PENNARIO'S previously reviewed performances (see page 209 in the November ARG) are sturdy and unobjectionable, lacking only in the lyrical quieter portions of these scores. As on the tape, Capitol's sound here gives a good approximation of concert-hall sound, with the piano in sensible balance with the orchestra. Again, as on the tape, the piano is a bit too diffuse. Over-all sound quality is separated from that of the tape by an ever-so-thin and barely detectable veil. The recorded level, as seems to be typical of Capitol stereodisc releases, is on the low side.

—P.C.P.



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GROFÉ: *Grand Canyon Suite*; Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Columbia ML-5286, \$4.98.

GROFÉ: *Grand Canyon Suite*; *Mississippi Suite*; Eastman-Rochester Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. Mercury MG-50049, \$4.98.

▲BOTH performances of the more familiar work are top-notch. Ormandy's is the more lush; the broad string writing gets the full Philadelphia treatment. Hanson manages to imbue his with a more intense tautness that reaches a shattering climax in the "Cloudburst" section. Mercury, making use of the considerable record space remaining (which Columbia does not) includes the less successful *Mississippi Suite*. Hanson's interpretation is all that one could ask. The Mercury album has been miked at a lower level and closer range. The results are well balanced, realistic, and clear. Columbia's reproduction is far wider in range, higher in level, and more glossy. The hand of the monitor is much in evidence, particularly in the "Painted Desert" and the "Cloudburst". —A.K.

HINDEMITH: *Symphony in E flat*; London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Everest LPBR-6008, \$4.98, and Stereo SDBR-6008, \$5.98.

▲WRITTEN in 1940, Hindemith's *Symphony in E flat* has long seemed to me to be one of his major works. Here, indeed, his strong inventive ideas, his expressive power, and the logic of his structure succeed in obliterating the enslavement to certain academic formulas apparent in most of the music he has composed since the late thirties. This is one of the first recordings to be issued by the Everest label and one cannot but be astounded at the realism and purity of its sound quality. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the performance itself. The playing of the orchestra tends to be sloppy. Balance among the instrumental choirs is usually faulty; the brass and percussion sections often overpower the weak woodwind section. Finally, Sir Adrian's conducting is rhythmically very limp and he tends to bypass the inner structure of contrapuntal figures. As an example, the *Scherzo* is taken at such breathless speed that the orchestra has difficulty in defining the staccato character of the main theme. In the contrasting Trio section, the accompanying arabesques by solo strings can hardly be heard at all. After comparing this newest version to an older one on the Columbia label under Werner Janssen (now discontinued), I must say that the latter had a much stronger command and deeper understanding of the work, notwithstanding the vintage sound. —A.S.

●
KETELBEY: *In a Chinese Temple Garden, Bank Holiday, In the Mystic Land of Egypt, Jungle Drums, In a Persian Market, In a Monastery Garden, Bells Across the Meadows, With Honor Crowned*; Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Armando Aliberti. Westminster Stereo WST-15005, \$5.98.

▲THESE pops-concert perennials are terribly corny even in such charming performances as we have here. Hi-fi hi-jinks are abundant (bells, blocks, bird-chirps, gongs, and the like), and West-

minster's sound certainly rises to the occasion. Stereo depth and directionality are excellent. —P.C.P.

●
LIADOV: *Kikimora*, Op. 63; *The Enchanted Lake*, Op. 62; *A Musical Snuff Box*, Op. 32; *Baba Yaga*, Op. 56; **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** *Capriccio Espagnol*, Op. 35; **PROKOFIEV:** *Overture on Hebrew Themes*, Op. 34; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Efrem Kurtz. Capitol-EMI G-7106, \$4.98.

(*Baba Yaga, Kikimora*)
Ansermet, Suisse Romande..... London LL-1068
(Rimsky-Korsakov)
Szell, Cleveland..... Epic LC-3483

▲IT isn't often, since Koussevitzky left the helm of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, that one encounters the colorful vignettes of Liadov at concerts. The neglect is undeserved, for although the size and scope of the composer's output cannot be said to be ambitious, his tonal landscapes are a delight. Kurtz does well by them, but I should have preferred the original form of *Baba Yaga* rather than the arranged, abridged, and reorchestrated version offered here. By the same token, Prokofiev's own instrumentation for string quartet, clarinet, and piano is far more effective than the full orchestra (without piano) utilized here. The interpretation, partly as a consequence of this, lacks wit. Rimsky-Korsakov's thrice-heard opus suggests the morning after the festival in this plodding account. The reproduction is clean but "boomy". —A.K.

●
LISZT: *Malédiction; Totentanz*; Alfred Brendel (piano), Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Michael Gielen. Vox Stereo ST-PL11.030, \$5.95.

▲THE *Malédiction*, a rarely played work, is, like much else of Liszt's output, full of sound and fury but of little musical significance. Pianistic histrionics are abundant in this piece as well as in the more familiar *Totentanz*. Brendel seems to take them in stride and is able, in general, to produce a big fat piano tone ideally suited to the music. Vox's engineering is quite rich, clean, and spacious. The piano wandered a good bit from side to side but was otherwise quite realistic-sounding. —P.C.P.

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Mahler's First— and Everest's too

FOR CONVENIENCE I am taking this occasion to examine jointly two new Mahler "Firsts" recorded under English conductors, though one of them is available only on import at the present time. Those who may suppose that there is a typically "British" way of looking at Mahler will be interested to hear that Sir Adrian plays the *Scherzo* nearly 50 per cent faster than Sir John—respectively the fastest and slowest of eleven recorded versions (including three now discontinued). This is of course the greatest number of times any single work by Mahler has been recorded, putting well up in the "popular favorites" class a symphony whose early demise has been anticipated by some pros from its first critics in 1889 to the late Olin Downes, who termed it "the work of an epigone". I think the public which responds to this work is now entitled to a re-examination of the varying attitudes of its interpreters.

It is, to be sure, a more loosely constructed work than those which followed it. Mahler conceded as much when he

used for the first and only time the phrase "almost a fantasia" to characterize its finale. But as we well know from the more fantasia-like offerings of Tchaikovsky, one conductor may still sense and convey the underlying formal logic while another willingly revels in sheer rhapsodizing. Outstanding among the former is Horenstein, whose Vox recording I regret to say is not among those currently available. It is largely a matter of timing, as I can illustrate in two crucial passages, near the opening and close. (1) The first movement is ideally about sixteen minutes long, but the exposition of its themes, after a slow introduction, lasts a mere two minutes. Mahler indicated that this all-important, brief statement should be repeated, and the sense of structural "rightness" this produces is so patent that I can only wonder whether the celebrated Mahlerites (eight out of eleven) who disregard it do not secretly agree with the detractors of the man as a symphonist. Horenstein honors it, and of those listed above only Boult also does. (2) The other critical point is that moment midway in the finale when Mahler wrenches the tonality around to D major for the first time since the opening movement. (The finale opens in F minor.) It is a moment of triumph as unexpected as a first view of green earth after hurtling in through the clouds from outer space. I do not exaggerate when I say that whether this finale is experienced as formless rhapsody or an entity as logical as Mozart can be largely dependent on the conductor's feeling for the boundless exhilaration of

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 1 in D*; London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Everest LPBR-6005, \$4.98, and Stereo SDBR-6005, \$5.98.

SAME: Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. Pye CCL-30117, on import only.

Borsamsky, Radio Berlin...Van. 436. Ur. 7080
Steinberg, Pittsburgh...Capitol 8224
Kubelik, Vienna Phil...London 1107
Walter, N. Y. Phil...Columbia 4958
Kletzki, Israel Phil...Angel 35180
Scherchen, London Phil.-Sym...Westminster 18014

By JACK DIETHER

this sublime moment. It is prepared by a "molto ritenuto", a second *ritenuto* after an intervening "a tempo", and finally a *caesura*. The slighting or poor timing of any one of the three means the conductor is just "getting through" it; it will not and cannot sound the note of conviction on which the symphony now hangs. Only Horenstein achieves that utter conviction, for which virtue atop many lesser ones I account his interpretation the only one ultimately satisfactory, if you care for the symphony enough to take it home and play it more than two or three times. One can only hope that Lyrichord's recent re-issuance of another deleted Vox, Schubert's great Mass in E Flat, may be a happy portent that this, too, will reappear on another label. In Horenstein's absence, Walter is "preferred but not endorsed".

And what, you may well ask, became of Boult's promising beginning? It died with the first phrase of the following *Scherzo*, so jolly and clever in its streamlined briskness, so jumbled and meaningless when the contrapuntal involvements ensue. This is what bad Mahler conductors never remember when they pick up the stick and begin waving. Wagner's admonition that the correct *Allegro* is that in which everything is clear doesn't apply only to the first twenty bars. Barbirolli plods; Horenstein, like the baby bear's porridge, is just right. The mock funeral march on *Frère Jacques* that follows is understood by most; at least the main section is. What Walter and Horenstein understand just a little better is that the barrel-organ music is the more agonizingly funny at the same solemn

tread as the dirge, so there is no license, either in writing or implied, to speed up perceptibly until the "Suddenly much faster" near the end of the movement. Boult seems to think the whole thing should spin along cheerfully: "Mahler's digging us in the ribs, you know, so let's not take it seriously." I should also like to mention an idiosyncrasy in both British conductors' first movements: the repeated cuckoo call (clarinet) that unexpectedly runs down on the last notes. As no one else does this, it suggests, more than coincidence, a misprint in the parts distributed in that country.

What the new versions from Pye and Everest do offer in full measure is some rattling good sound *qua* sound. The Hallé tone as recaptured by Pye is delightful. The solo winds have breadth and piquancy, the strings great richness and depth. Barbirolli takes a more soloistic view of most of the music, and allows ample room for individual display within the bounds of symphonic coherence. The haunting moment when the solo flute takes over the "saucy" tune from the E-flat clarinet (the one that keeps sabotaging the funeral march) never sounded so beautiful. The drone effect (recurrent open fifth in C sharp by the double basses) in the development of the *Scherzo* sounds magnificent on this record, as does the percussion throughout. The quality of sound produced by Everest, in this initial release of the new company, is nothing short of fabulous, and equally so in its stereo counterpart. I am particularly impressed with the bass response, most of all on behalf of the percussion department. In this symphony Mahler differentiates very explicitly between the tone color of the timpani and the bass drum, actually using them antiphonally, as well as the latter as harmonic bass to the former. Everest brings out the distinction more clearly than I have ever heard it. Obviously if the lower partials of the bass drum sound are skimpy, it is going to sound more like another timp-tuning than a basically deeper instrument, and that is just how it usually does sound on records. For this astoashingly dramatic effect, Everest deserves a special bow.

MENDELSSOHN: "A Midsummer Night's Dream": Overture; Scherzo; Nocturne, and Wedding March; **SCHUBERT:** "Rosamunde": Overture, Entr'acte No. 2, Ballet Music No. 1; Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by George Szell, Epic LC-3433, \$4.98.

("Rosamunde")

Lehmann, Berlin Phil. (complete), Decca DXB-144
 ▲IT is a pity that Epic did not see fit to include more of each score, for Szell and his wonderful orchestra inject warmth, exhilaration, and vibrancy into both groups of excerpts. The texture in the incidental music to Shakespeare's blithe comedy is almost weightless and luminously transparent. A slight error on the liner lists the Ballet Music No. 2 from "Rosamunde", rather than the programmed Ballet Music No. 1. The engineering is first-rate.

—A.K.

●
MOZART: Piano Concerto No. 16 in D, K. 451; Piano Concerto No. 23 in A, K. 488; Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Columbia Symphony conducted by Alexander Schneider, Columbia ML-5297, \$4.98.

▲ALTHOUGH Mozart's richest outpourings and most ingratiating statements in the concerto form were yet to come, the K. 451 is a work of brilliant invention and crystalline beauty. Since this is the only version of it now in the LP catalogue, we are fortunate that in Serkin and Schneider it has two exponents of obvious devotion. Though some will probably question the slow tempo in the second movement (marked *andante*) of the more fluent and outgoing K.488, no one can take issue with the rewarding sensitivity with which everything is played. Both concerti are expertly engineered.

—A.K.

■
MOZART: Piano Concerto No. 22 in E flat, K. 482; José Iturbi (pianist and conductor) with the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra. Angel 35539, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

Serkin, Casals.....Columbia ML-4569

▲IF only for its engineering, this record should not have been released. The clangorous and hollow-sounding solo instrument has that "in the other room"

quality. The orchestral voice sounds like a gravel grinder. All things considered, one does not feel that the soloist and the accompanying ensemble are playing in any joint endeavor. This inference is emphasized by the dissimilarity of intonation between the violins and the piano, often when they are supposed to be playing in unison. Interpretatively, Iturbi's extensive use of *accelerando-rubato* embraces the mistaken stylistic premise that what serves Chopin serves Mozart. —A.K.

●
MOZART: Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466; **J. S. BACH:** Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D; Edwin Fischer (pianist and conductor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra. Angel 35593, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

(Bach)
 Busch Ch. Orch.....Angel COLH-14
 Foss, Zimmler Chamber Orch.....Unicorn -1039
 (Mozart)

Serkin, Ormandy.....Columbia ML-4424
 ▲BOTH performances are held down to Kammermusik scale. Yet the cadenzas in the first and last movements of the Mozart, which are of Fischer's own invention, are symphonic and massive in both structure and delivery. The Bach in particular shows notable care in organization and meticulous neatness in execution, though clarity need not be bought at the expense of such measured tempi and such concentration of interest on the first and third movements. The Mozart also is expounded with care, but here Fischer manages to bring a greater degree of warmth. He also brings to the Mozart a few ritards, accents, and rubati not found in the printed score. Both sides are sensitively recorded.

—A.K.

●
OFFENBACH: Gaité Parisienne; Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. Capitol Stereo SP-8405, \$5.98.

▲THIS version of *Gaité* has mighty stiff competition in the Fiedler-Boston Pops reading and comes off, by comparison, second best. There is less fun in this performance than I think there ought to be, with too much drive and too little relaxation in some of the waltzes. The sound is fine with respect to clarity and stereo separation, but a bit low in level. —P.C.P.

Milanov's 'Gioconda'

By PETER HUGH REED

THE MERITS of Ponchielli's "*La Gioconda*" are seldom discussed nowadays, particularly when the opera is presented with a first-rate cast of singers. Bernard Shaw was probably right when he observed back in the nineties that impresarios usually included "*La Gioconda*" in their repertoires "as a concession to the public demand for novelty". Except for four well-known arias, its music is a melodic mélange all too familiar to seasoned operagoers. Mounted lavishly and given such outstanding artists as the Metropolitan has presented in it over the years—Caruso, Amato, Destinn, Ober and Duchène or Gigli, Danise, Ponselle and Gordon—the tempestuous vigor of this opera's drama is most happily affirmed by vocal splendor. It was but right that the Met should revive it for Milanov, who assuredly deserves to rank with the great ones.

And it is good to have her inherent beauty of voice and dramatic temperament preserved in a recording of "*Gioconda*." Neither Callas nor Cerquetti, previously featured in LP versions of the

opera, seemed capable of summoning a similar correlation of vocal and dramatic artistry. As to Milanov's associates here, she has at least three who stand up in comparison to their earlier counterparts. These are Di Stefano, Warren, and Elias. Enzo Grimaldi was not intended to be as bestial as Del Monaco nor as colorless as Poggi made him in previous sets. Di Stefano at times does not seem quite at ease in the role of Enzo. Nevertheless, in his best moments his vocal expressiveness is more telling and gratifying to the musical ear than that of the others. Warren is a rich-voiced Barnaba, properly sinister without the dramatic coarseness of his immediate predecessor on records.

The part of Alvisé is entrusted to a competent basso, who sings well enough but lacks the temperament to make his performance convincing. The scene between Alvisé and Laura at the opening of act III fails to sustain the interest that it does in the London set, where Siepi and Simionato are the participants. Rosalind Elias, who has the dramatic puissance to make her portrayal of Laura a standout, is more convincing, and elsewhere in the company of Di Stefano and Warren, better served. You cannot carry a scene like this alone. Belen Amparan, as La Cieca, is an expressive vocalist if tonally a bit "clothly". She is preferable, however, to Franca Sacchi. The Roman orchestra and chorus, under the knowing direction of Previtali, acquit themselves as all such Italian performers should in this music.

To sum up, this is for me the recording of the opera and, I think, the one with which the majority will wish to live. The sound is excellent.

PONCHIELLI: "*La Gioconda*"; Zinka Milanov (La Gioconda), Giuseppe Di Stefano (Enzo Grimaldo), Leonard Warren (Barnaba), Rosalind Elias (Laura), Belen Amparan (La Cieca), Plinio Clabassi (Alvisé), Fernando Valentini (Zuane), Giacomo Cottino (Isepo), Virgilio Carbonari (Un Cantore), Fernando Valentini (Un Pilota), Orchestra and Chorus of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia conducted by Fernando Previtali. RCA Victor set ML-6139, six sides, \$14.94.



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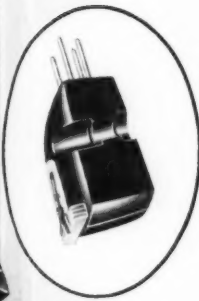
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PROKOFIEV: *Symphony No. 5 in B flat, Op. 100*; Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Columbia ML-5260, \$4.98.

Koussevitzky, Boston.... RCA Victor LVT-1026
Schippers, Phil..... Angel 35527

▲COLUMBIA'S recording is beautiful, exhibiting the peerless tonal qualities and stunning articulative abilities of this great ensemble in spotless clarity and acute focus. Ormandy's performance contains a degree of contrapuntal illumination that I have never before heard in this work. But structural definition is bought at the cost of tension, convincing tempi, and over-all drive, particularly in the second and fourth movements, where persuasion depends largely upon the biting utterance of repeatedly accented (*marcato*) rhythmic patterns at an *allegro* tempo—a pace not fully honored by Ormandy. The prevailing impression is over-placidity. The Koussevitzky reading still takes first honors, though the sonics are somewhat dated. Schippers' excellent one with the Philharmonia is not far behind. —A.K.

PUCCINI: "*Tosca*"; Antonietta Stella (Tosca); Gianni Poggi (Mario); Giuseppe Taddei (Scarpia); Ferruccio Mazzoli (Cesare Angelotti); Leo Padis (Sacristan); Piero le Palma (Spoletta); Antonio Sacchetti (Sciarrone); Gerardo Gaudioso (Jailer); Giovanni Bianchini (Shepherd Boy); San Carlo Chorus and Orchestra, Naples, conducted by Tullio Serafin. Columbia set M2L-402, four sides, \$7.96.

Callas, Di Stefano, Gobbi, de Sabata. Angel 3508
Milanov, Bjorling, Warren, Leinsdorf
RCA Victor LM-6052
Tebaldi, Campora, Mascherini, Erede

▲SINCE the publication of Joseph Kerman's provocative *Opera as Drama* by Knopf in 1956, "*Tosca*" has probably become the most abused opera of modern times. For most of us, however, all it takes is a good performance to settle the arguments in Puccini's favor. On second thought, the performance must be more than good. Three of the singing actors and the conductor need to be outstanding. Back in the thirties many thought they had found the final answer to these requirements in the Caniglia-Gigli-Borgioli-de

Fabritius portrayal, and there are those today who insist that advances in recording techniques have not dimmed its lustre. Until quite recently the LP version was retained on the active list. But even that famous cast was challenged by one of the great modern operatic recordings, with Callas, Di Stefano, Gobbi, and de Sabata. Another famous Tosca, Tebaldi, is the chief ornament of a less perfectly rounded recording. And recently Milanov, Bjorling, Warren, and Leinsdorf have joined forces in an estimable if comparatively unexciting version.

The latest contender is notable in two respects—it has outstanding performances by the Scarpia and the conductor. Serafin, as might be expected, is complete master of Puccini's score, and he makes the orchestra sound quite wonderful, though (in line with pre-stereo practices in opera recording) the voices too often overbalance it. The *Te Deum* scene, which closes the first act, and Scarpia's death in the second, are tense and exciting, due very largely to Serafin. Taddei's Scarpia is unctuous and oily—a villain, but a smooth one, from his first entrance one to make any lady cringe if she were to find herself, as Tosca does, alone with

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The Index of Record Reviews

Compiled by KURTZ MYERS

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him. This baritone has a handsome voice to work with. Unfortunately he outshines both the Tosca and the Cavara-dossi. Stella, for all her youth, sounds a little tired. Her tone is often frayed, her phrasing hardly a model. Poggi's voice has a tearful quality at all times, and he shows no dramatic imagination at all. Nor does his singing have a cleanness, especially his attacks. There is a good Sacristan, who does not overdo his characterization, and the smaller parts are well handled. The boys' chorus in the first act is very charming, and the Shepherd does his chesty little song well. He is recorded, however, as though he were singing in an empty room next door.

—P.L.M.

●
RACHMANINOFF: *Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27*; Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. Mercury Stereo SR-90019, \$5.95.

▲THE quality most harmful to this performance is Paray's surprising display of inflexibility. A.K., along with his condemnation of this reading (page 217, January 1958 ARG), found fault with the sonic perspective Mercury supplied in the monophonic version. This criticism is not valid for the stereo transfer. Mercury's engineering here is marvelous. Although on the dry side, the orchestral sound is well-balanced, well-differentiated, and quite free of stridency and edginess. —P.C.P.

●
RACHMANINOFF: *Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 44*; **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** *Russian Easter Overture*; London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. RCA Victor LM-2185, \$4.98.

(Rachmaninoff)
Ormandy, Phila. Columbia ML-4961
(Rimsky-Korsakov)
Fiedler, Boston Pops. RCA Victor LM-2202

▲DESPITE the fact that Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony is less outgoing than the second it is a work of greater appeal than Boult's genteel account indicates. RCA Victor would do a service to the composer and public, and hence to itself, by reissuing Rachmaninoff's own performance with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Lacking this historic document, we are fortunate in

having the fine version by Ormandy and the same orchestra. Boult's views on the *Russian Easter* can only be called dull.

—A.K.

●
RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Scheherazade, Op. 35*; London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. RCA Victor LM-2208, \$4.98.

Beecham, Royal Phil. Angel 35505
▲THE sultry, bejeweled siren who graces the sleeve of this RCA Victor release hardly could have been the vision conjured by the benign and dispassionate old party who leads the music within. But then, I am assured that it is the cover matter rather than the contents which sells an album. If this rather sad commentary on American tastes is accurate, RCA Victor certainly has another hit on its hands. Happily, the performance is as fine a delineation as one is likely to hear, though lacking somewhat in the expected sensuousness. The entirety is built to a thunderously realistic shipwreck scene. The excellent reproduction contributes tellingly. —A.K.

●
RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Russian Easter Overture*; **BORODIN:** *In the Steppes of Central Asia*; "Prince Igor" Overture, *Polovetzian Dances*; Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. RCA Victor LM-2202, \$4.98.

(*Russian Easter Overture*)
Stokowski RCA Victor LM-1816
(*In the Steppes of Central Asia*)
Stokowski RCA Victor LM-1816

▲THOSE who took issue with this reviewer's earlier views regarding the Ansermet conception of the *Russian Easter Overture*, and other compositions of similar ethnic origin and period, are recommended to these Fiedler accounts as examples of how, in my judgment, these works should be played. The eminent Bostonian, while taking scant liberty with the written text, manages to imbue the orchestrations with a spontaneous musicality and infectious exuberance that the Ansermet versions largely lacked. The stimulus of a strong pulsation adds to the basic values. Elements of atmosphere and contrast also are in greater supply than in the Ansermet performances. To my knowledge, this is

the only recording of the "Prince Igor" Overture now extant, save in those of the complete opera. Although the stereo recording probably will emerge with fine clarity, the monophonic disc is a mite reverberant. —A.K.

●
ROSSINI: *Overtures to "The Barber of Seville", "The Silken Ladder", "William Tell", "The Thieving Magpie", "The Italian Girl in Algiers", "Cinderella";* Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Igor Markevitch. Angel 35548, \$4.98 or \$3.98.

Toscanini, NBC RCA Victor LM-2040

▲**MARKEVITCH'S** tightly knit realizations of the "William Tell" and "Barber of Seville" Overtures are sensitively conceived and built to rousing compelling climaxes. These two are easily the equal of Toscanini's concepts. The rest are not. Set forth more slowly, the "Gazza Ladra" Overture lacks the fire and snap we have become accustomed to. The excerpts from "Cenerentola" and "L'Italiani in Algieri", though quite agreeably propounded, want more suavity and delicacy in the phrasing. There is more delectably impish humor in my special favorite, "The Silken Ladder", than Markevitch captures. The "L'Italiani" is less well recorded than the others. —A.K.

●
SAINT-SAËNS: *Havanaise, Op. 83, Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28; CHAUSSON: Poème, Op. 25;* Aaron Rosand (violin), Symphony Orchestra of the Southwest German Radio conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. Vox Stereo ST-PL 10.470, \$5.95.

▲**ROSAND'S** previously-reviewed performances (page 115 of the November, 1957, issue) of the Saint-Saëns pair are again welcome, though the *Rondo Capriccioso* is a little less capricious than might be hoped for. The Chausson is suitably impassioned and effective. A major annoyance here is the outrageously unrealistic balance between the violin and the orchestra. The violin sound is excellent in itself but much, much too loud for the relative level of the orchestra. Otherwise, the sonics become cloudy and rough in high-level passages, although the stereo effect is good. —P.C.P.

SCHÖNBERG: *Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4; VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis;* New York Philharmonic conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. Columbia ML-5285, \$4.98.

(*Verklärte Nacht*)

Ormandy, Phila. Columbia ML-4316

▲**MITROPOULOS'** statement of Schönberg's best known work is highly personal, charged with deep emotion and not always hewing to the letter of the score. It is an interpretation that projects the turbulence and erotic quality of this music to a greater degree than most, sometimes rising to a feverish pitch. He elicits a leaner sound from the string ensemble than is usual in this work. There are other excellent versions, notably Ormandy's, but none so singularly evocative. The Vaughan Williams piece is also one of Mitropoulos' specialties, and he conducts it with fine fervor. My own preferences here are toward slower tempi and the more subdued ethereal-religious vein of the Stokowski performance that was recently withdrawn. Columbia's engineers have done a laudable job. However, thirteen minutes (Vaughan Williams) on an LP side hardly is one's money's worth these days. —A.K.

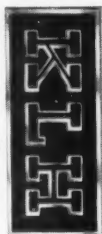
●
SCHUBERT: *Impromptus (complete); Drei Klavierstücke (1828);* Walter Gieseke (piano). Angel 35533/34, \$4.98 or \$3.98 each.

▲**GIESEKE** penetrated to the heart of Schubert's radiant prose. He speaks its lines with iridescent warmth and disarming simplicity. These exquisite performances must take their places beside many others as eloquent eulogies to a great artist. Angel has given them fitting reproductions. —A.K.

●
SCHUBERT: *Quintet in A, Op. 114 ("Trout");* Endres Quartet; Rolf Reinhardt (piano). Vox Stereo ST-PL 10.890, \$5.95.

▲**THIS** ever fresh and charming masterpiece is presented here in a performance which has little to offer in the way of either sparkle or warmth. The playing is competent but simply not limpid enough to suit this music. Vox's stereo sound is above reproach. —P.C.P.

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SCHUBERT: Music for Piano, Four Hands, Vol. III—*Marche militaire in D, Op. 51, No. 1; Grande marche in E, Op. 40, No. 6; Marches caractéristiques in C, Op. 121, Nos. 1, 2; Andantino varié in B minor, Op. 84, No. 1; Divertissement à la hongroise in G minor, Op. 54*; Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus. Westminster XWN-18790, \$4.98.

▲**FELICITY** multiplied. These young men have Schubert in their fingers like no other pair, as amply demonstrated in the previous volumes (made up in part of reshuffled reissues from the old "WL" series). The present recital apparently is new, although one of the *Marches caractéristiques* is listed also on XWN-18344. I suppose that it is not the same performance but no matter, for this latest release is quite autonomous and I trust that no prospective purchaser will be put off because he has missed its predecessors. Others, I am sure, will not be dissuaded, for it is altogether a joy from the first moment to the last—the playing is tidy, properly in scale, stylish, and singing. In the *Divertissement*, keen-eared balletomanes will detect a smidgen of Balanchine's currently popular *Pas de dix*, the music of which is adapted from Glazunov's score for *Raymonda*. Schubert obviously had helped himself to the same Magyar folk tunes, with results that are, however, far more Schubertian than Hungarian. Westminster's sound is excellent. —J.L.

STRAVINSKY: *Firebird Suite, Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra*; Charlotte Zelka (piano), Symphony Orchestra of the Southwest German Radio, Baden-Baden, conducted by Jascha Horenstein (in the *Firebird*) and Harold Byrns. Vox Stereo ST-PL 11.020, \$5.95.

▲**FINE** in all respects. Byrns and Zelka give a vigorous performance of the *Capriccio*. The sound is spacious and a bit reverberant, but stereo provides the necessary clarity. Horenstein's *Firebird* is solid and clean-cut, paying close attention to the score. The sound in the *Firebird* is a bit drier than that in the *Capriccio* (See also page 270 in the February, 1958, issue and page 138 in the October, 1958, issue.) Highly recommended. —P.C.P.

Ansermet's 'Petrouchka'

By ALFRED KATINE

LET IT be stated at the outset that this country never has seen *Petrouchka* performed as it should be, or at least not since the long-ago heyday of the Diaghilev company. This ingenious choreographic creation of Michel Fokine is still among the supreme challenges of the ballet repertory. Its projective demands (sustaining atmosphere and rhythm, contrasting character), not to mention the difficulty of its choreographic counterpoint, are tremendous. The fact that the three puppets (Petrouchka, the Ballerina, and the Moor) are conceived on graduated levels of subtlety and satire only heightens the mastery of Fokine's conception. No English nor American ballet company has, in my opinion, begun to do justice to this work. (What the Moiseyev Dancers could do with it, using balletic soloists as the puppets, is in the realm of pleasant daydreaming.)

Fokine's achievement could not have been realized without the collaboration of another genius who was also a rebel in his time—Stravinsky. The challenges inherent in his brilliant musical creation are exactly the same, except that the projection must be on an aural rather than a visual plane.

There are elements of Ansermet's realization that could hardly be improved: the luminous clarity of orchestral definition throughout; the color-in-sound painting by the bassoon and the (Charlatan's) flute just preceding the *Danse russe*; the opening of *Chez le maure* (the clumsy Moor and his coconut). Though the snare drum introduction (denoting the Ballerina's entrance) and the trumpet solo (her parade before the Moor) are not too

well managed, the same solo trumpet as well as the flute, which continues the melodic line, the winds, and the brass which supply counterpoint and obbligato during the *pas de deux* of the coquettish Ballerina and the oafish Moor—all these paint a tone picture that at once apprehends the high comedy as well as the clumsiness of the situation. On its own merits, the eerie ending of the final tableau, in which Petrouchka's ghost desirously returns, is hauntingly depicted.

I must exclude the second tableau, or *Chez Petrouchka* as it is called, from among the positive elements in this performance, because I feel that Ansermet fails to capture much of the poignancy and pitiful sarcasm of the hapless little puppet, of which this entire scene is both a visual and musical expression.

It is in the lyric moments of the score that Ansermet penetrates, and projects, most meaningfully.

But lyricism, if it is to be effective as an integral part of so essentially dramatic an entity as *Petrouchka*, must be contrasted with something of bolder design and greater activity—in this case, the scurrying pandemonium of the two carnival scenes (tableaux one and four). Unfortunately, due to over-slow tempi and a lack of inner tension, the conductor fails to lend credence to the musical suggestions of festive excitement and ethnic dancing. On both climactic occasions in which the Moor chases Petrouchka (tableaux two and four), Ansermet seems more concerned with the otherwise laudable clarity of instrumental differentiation than with the histrionics of the situations. The effects of such movingly etched intimate moments are necessarily blunted.

The near-perfect performance of this work probably lies in a combination of the account by Kurtz (on Angel) with the one at hand, for each has the positive qualities that the other lacks. London's microphoning is its best.

STRAVINSKY: *Petrouchka* (complete);
Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. London
LL-3018, \$3.98, or Stereo CS-6009,
\$4.98.

Kurtz, Phil. Angel 35552

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23*; Jacob Lateiner (piano); Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Armando Aliberti. Westminster Stereo WST-14018, \$5.98.

▲LATEINER'S approach to this concerto is mainly lyrical and gentle, quite in contrast to the stormy, showy readings so prevalent. In only one spot does he contradict himself: the flowing secondary theme in the last movement comes out consistently a little more turbulent than is warranted. Throughout, Lateiner produces a mellow, lovingly warm piano tone. Westminster's sound is more than adequate, the piano fortunately receiving somewhat less prominence than seems to be customary in concerto recordings. Aliberti's accompaniments are pedestrian.

—P.C.P.

●
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique")*; Chicago Symphony conducted by Fritz Reiner. RCA Victor LM-2216, \$4.98.

The Same: Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. Capitol-EMI G-7128, \$4.98.

Mitropoulos, N.Y. Phil. Columbia ML-5235
Mravinsky, Leningrad. Decca DXE-142

▲EVERY dynamic indication, every phrase marking, every dot or line over every note is meticulously observed by Reiner. Every contrapuntal or secondary voice is as transparently differentiated as one could wish. The instrumental intonation is always dead center; the playing crisply articulate and firmly disciplined. Reiner's performance of Tchaikovsky's valedictory is all this. It is also cold and impersonal. Because everything is played exactly as written, it is inevitable that some of the inherent emotion should come through, chiefly in the final movement. But this is Tchaikovsky without tears. Kempe, whose recent recorded concepts of German music have, in my opinion, suffered from excess tranquility, oddly enough offers as fervently felt and deeply dramatic a portrayal as is to be found on LP. His slow tempo in the second movement blunts its needed sweep, but not its message. The Philharmonia also plays outstandingly well. Both albums are skillfully recorded.

—A.K.

THUILLE: *Sextet in B flat, Op. 6*; Jesús María Sanromá (piano) with the Boston Woodwind Quintet. Boston Stereo BST-1001, \$5.95.

▲THE Austrian composer Ludwig Thuille (1861-1907) was so strongly influenced by Brahms that this music could conceivably be accepted as a "lost" work of the more famous composer. It is a lovely piece in its own right, however, and displays a sincerity and melodic inventiveness far from common. The wistful *Gavotte*, probably the most original moment of the score, is truly affecting. The Boston Woodwind Quintet, composed of first-desk men of the Boston Symphony, performs with smooth, sweet tone and luscious phrasing. It would be impossible to improve upon Sanromá's sensitive collaboration. Far from attracting attention to itself, his performance is beautifully blended into the total fabric. Microphoning was extremely distant, so it is difficult to "place" the instruments in space. Also, there is much reverberation, resulting in an echoey quality. Otherwise this is a superb disc. —D.H.M.

●
WAGNER: *"Lohengrin"*—*Prelude; Elsa's Dream and Scene with Lohengrin; Bridal Chorus; Love Duet; Lohengrin's Narration; Farewell Scene*; Annelies Kupper (Elsa); Helena Braun (Ortrud); Lorenz Fehenberger (Lohengrin); Otto von Rohr (King); Hans Braun (Herald); Bavarian Radio Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Eugen Jochum. Decca DL-9987, \$3.98.

▲ABOUT the best that can be said for this abridgment of Decca's complete *"Lohengrin"* is that it is a more or less typical contemporary German performance. The voices for the most part are none too steady, and there is little of the kind of modulated singing that can bring charm to the opera. There has been some skillful splicing in the first act, so that the cuts are not too abrupt, but the sections offered from the last act could not be so neatly connected. Much of the music most likely to appeal to a popular audience is included (the Act III Prelude is an exception), though some of the best (in the second act) is missing. —P.L.M.

Vocal recitals, mostly reissues

Le Livre d'Or du Chant: "Pagliacci"—*Un grande spettacolo; Vesti la giubba; No; Pagliaccio non son* (Leoncavallo); "Nerone"—*Queste ad un lido; Ecco la dea si china* (Boito); *Vieni* (Denza); "Ballo in Maschera"—*La rivedro nel estasi* (Verdi); "Gioconda"—*Cielo e mar* (Ponchielli); "Bohème"—*Che gelida manina; Tosca*—*Recondita armonia; E lucevan le stelle* (Puccini); "Iris"—*Apri la tua finestra* (Mascagni); "Rigoletto"—*Ella mi fu rapita* (Verdi), *La Campana di San Giusto* (Arona); Aureliano Pertile (tenor). French Odéon ODX-127, \$5.95. (Available through The Record Album, 208 West 80th St., New York 24, N. Y.)

▲PERTILE'S reputation as Toscanini's first favorite tenor (before Jan Peerce) is likely to stand; he flourished as a leading member of the Maestro's company in the famous seasons following World War I. Besides appearing in all the standard repertory, he took part in the world première of Boito's posthumous "Nerone" (two samples are included here). His one season at the Metropolitan might have been more successful had he not had the misfortune to make his debut as Cavaradossi to Jeritza's first local Tosca. The lady was so sensational that hardly any tenor singing opposite her could have attracted much notice. The writer of the jacket notes with this LP revival brackets Pertile with Caruso as the second of the century's two great tenors. Admirers of Gigli, to name only one contender, will react violently to this, though actually there is little to compare between the two men. Pertile's voice was closer to Zenatello's or Martinelli's, to judge by the records. It was a bright voice, sharp in the sense of having a cutting edge; it is hard to imagine its ever getting lost in the waves of orchestral sound. It had great intensity too, and the pulse of life was in it. But Pertile was an Italian, and the *Pagliacci* selections are more charged with emotion even than the well-known

Caruso versions of them. The dubbing has been quite well accomplished here, from both acoustic and electric recordings, all, apparently, from the period around the changeover in technique, so that the contrast between the two types is not so very striking. In the cases of the "Bohème" and "Iris" airs the pitch is a half-tone low, which I doubt is as it should be.

—P.L.M.

●
Souvenirs of Opera, Ser. IV: "Manon"—*Suis-je gentille ainsi?; Ce bruit de l'or* (Massenet); Blanche Arral (soprano). "Semiramide"—*Ah! quel giorno* (Rossini); Eleanora de Cisneros (mezzo-soprano). "Adriana Lecouvreur"—*L'anima ho stanca* (Cilea); Aristodemo Giorgini (tenor). "Le Prophète"—*Ach, mein Sohn* (Meyerbeer); Marianna Brandt (contralto). "Dubrovsky"—*Ne jamais la voir* (Napravnik); Medea Mei-Figner (soprano); Nicolai Figner (tenor). "Le Concert à la cour"—*Entendez-vous au loin l'archet de la folie?* (Auber); Alice Verlet (soprano). "Lucrezia Borgia"—*Brindisi* (Donizetti); Guerrina Fabbri (mezzo-soprano). "Le Tribut de Zamora"—*Garde la couronne des reines* (Gounod); Zélie de Lussan (soprano). "Roméo et Juliette"—*Allons, jeunes gens!* (Gounod); Jean Delmas (basso). "L'Africaine"—*O paradis* (Meyerbeer); Pierre Cornubert (tenor). "Lohengrin"—*Bridal Chamber Scene* (Wagner); Emmy Destinn (soprano); Rudolf Berger (tenor). International Record Collectors' Club L-7014, \$5.50 plus 50 cents mailing fee in U. S. (318 Reservoir Ave., Bridgeport 6, Conn.).

▲SEVERAL of these recordings have appeared before on the IRCC label, but back in the days of 78 rpm. It should be said at the outset that the new dubbings are exceptionally successful. Arral was a brilliant singer with a fascinatingly French voice, rich and even in the lower reaches, sparkling and radiant on top. If ever a singer sang with *chic* it was Arral.

As a young aspirant to operatic honors she had a small role in the premiere of "*Mignon*", which fact gives this recording (never published in the original) historic as well as vocal interest. The Cisneros selection is from an Edison record, perhaps the best she made. The voice had great flexibility and a remarkably long range, though she was not above some rather choppy phrasing. Giorgini had a very light and high voice, and he was one of the most appreciated lyric tenors of his time. He will be remembered as the Rodolfo in Victor's first electrical "*Bohème*". The recording here takes him back to 1904. The Brandt is a precious memento of one of Wagner's own singers, who alternated with Materna in the first Bayreuth production of "*Parsifal*". Of three cylinders she made in 1905 (she was born in 1842) this one seems to me easily the best. It is re-recorded with almost incredible realism, showing a voice of grand proportions and the style to go with it. The Figners' duet represents the golden age in Russia, dating back to the turn of the century. The singers were husband and wife, each a first-rate artist in his own right. The duet sung in French in Napravnik's opera is a setting of Sully Prudhomme's poem *Soupir* (set by Duparc, among many others). The music, incidentally, provides the theme for the best known tenor aria in the same opera. This is another unusually successful dubbing. Alice Verlet, one of Edison's favorite sopranos, gives a dashing performance of an unusual aria, and Fabbri tosses off the "*Lucrezia Borgia*" warhorse without, however, effacing memories of Schumann-Heink. De Lussan was most famous for her Carmen, but her warm, rich voice is very effective in this little-known Gounod excerpt. Delmas is mightily impressive in his aria, the big, healthy voice rolling out in all its amplitude; and Cornubert sounds very well in *O paradis*. From Destinn and Berger we have all but a couple of pages of the "*Lohengrin*" duet. There are lovely things in her singing, and he makes a generally good impression. Berger had had a career as a baritone before changing over into the tenor range. He was in his second season at the Metropolitan when he died of a

heart attack in 1915. He was Marie Rappold's husband. The voice at its best is unusually free for a German tenor, and he knows the Wagner style. In the tenderer passages, as *Athmest du nicht*, he seems not altogether at ease here, but this may have been the effect of the recording ordeal. The original discs from which this dubbing is taken are much sought-after collectors' items. —P.L.M.

●
MOZART: "*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*"—*Welcher Kummer herrscht in Seelen; Ach, ich liebe; Martern aller Arten*; "*Don Giovanni*"—*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto; Vedrai carino*; "*Die Zauberflöte*"—*O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn; Der Holle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen*; **R. STRAUSS:** "*Ariadne auf Naxos*"—*Grossmachtige Prinzessin*; Erika Koeth (soprano) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Schachter (Mozart) and Otto Matzerath (Strauss). EMI-Capitol G-7114, \$4.98.

▲LISTENING to this program one can hardly help reflecting that perhaps Rita Streich is being given a run for her money. Koeth's is the same type of voice, somewhat reminiscent of Erna Berger's in certain spots, and she has facility very like Streich's. I should judge on this evidence that it is a smaller voice, but it is well rounded, with exceptionally firm and full top tones. In this I would say she surpasses Streich, though she seems somewhat less assured and there is less of drama in her vocalism. She displays a good legato in the first "*Entführung*" number, which, incidentally, is considerably cut; then she demonstrates her fluent coloratura in the other two. The Zerlina arias are more ordinary, lacking a touch or two of piquancy. The opening recitative of the first Queen of the Night aria is unusual in its calm dignity; one can imagine Tamino being really impressed when addressed in this manner. But the aria itself is a little too obviously measured rhythmically. All the best qualities I have noted are again apparent in the Strauss, in which the singing is really stunning. No, the art of coloratura is not yet dead. —P.L.M.

Stereodisc Miscellany

11 opera
reissues

CHERUBINI: "*Medea*"; Maria Meneghini Callas (Medea), Mirto Picchi (Jason), Renata Scotto (Glauce), Giuseppe Modesti (Creon), others, Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala, Milan, conducted by Tullio Serafin. Mercury Stereo set OL-3-104, six sides, \$17.85.

GIORDANO: "*Andrea Chénier*"; Mario Del Monaco (Chénier), Renata Tebaldi (Madeleine), Ettore Bastianini (Charles), Fernando Corena (Mathieu), others, Chorus and Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia conducted by Gianandrea Gavazzeni. London Stereo set OSA-1303, six sides, \$17.94.

GLUCK: "*Alceste*"; Kirsten Flagstad (Alceste), Raoul Jobin (Admetus), others, Geraint Jones Orchestra and Singers conducted by Geraint Jones. London Stereo set OSA-1403, eight sides, \$23.90.

MOZART: "*Don Giovanni*"; Cesare Siepi (Don Giovanni), Fernando Corena (Leporello), Anton Dermota (Don Ottavio), Suzanne Danco (Donna Anna), Lisa Della Casa (Donna Elvira), Hilde Gueden (Zerlina), others, Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. London Stereo set OSA-1401, eight sides, \$23.90.

MOZART: "*Le Nozze di Figaro*"; Cesare Siepi (Figaro), Hilde Gueden (Susanna), Lisa Della Casa (Countess), Alfred Poell (Almaviva), Suzanne Danco (Cherubino), Fernando Corena (Dr. Bartolo), Hilde Rössl-Majdan (Marcellina), others, Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. London Stereo set OSA-1402, eight sides, \$23.90.

PONCHIELLI: "*La Gioconda*"; Anita Cerquetti (La Gioconda), Mario Del Monaco (Enzo), Cesare Siepi (Alvise), Giulietta Simionato (Laura), Ettore Bastianini (Barnaba), others, Chorus

and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino conducted by Gianandrea Gavazzeni. London Stereo set OSA-1302, six sides, \$17.94.

ROSSINI: "*The Barber of Seville*"; Maria Meneghini Callas (Rosina), Tito Gobbi (Figaro), Luigi Alva (Almaviva), Nicola Zaccaria (Don Basilio), others, Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Alceo Galliera. Angel Stereo set S-3559 C/L, six sides, \$18.94.

R. STRAUSS: "*Arabella*"; Lisa Della Casa (Arabella), Hilde Gueden (Zdenka), George London (Mandryka), others, Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. London Stereo set OSA-1404, eight sides, \$23.90.

R. STRAUSS: "*Der Rosenkavalier*"; Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Marschallin), Christa Ludwig (Octavian), Teresa Stich-Randall (Sophie), Otto Edelmann (Ochs), Ljuba Welitsch (Marianne), others, Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Angel Stereo set S-3563 D/L, eight sides, \$24.92.

VERDI: "*La Forza del Destino*"; Mario Del Monaco (Don Alvaro), Renata Tebaldi (Leonore), Ettore Bastianini (Don Carlo), Cesare Siepi (Padre Guardiano), Fernando Corena (Fra Melitone), Giulietta Simionato (Preziosilla), others, Chorus and Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli. London Stereo set OSA-1405, eight sides, \$23.90.

VERDI: "*Il Trovatore*"; Mario Del Monaco (Manrico), Renata Tebaldi (Leonora), Giulietta Simionato (Azucena), Ugo Savarese (Count di Luna), Giorgio Tozzi (Ferrando), others, Chorus of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Alberto Erede. London Stereo set OSA-1304, six sides, \$17.94.

THE OPERAS and operettas newly released on stereo only (London's "*Fanciulla del West*", "*Giuditta*", etc.) are in the hands of P. H. R. and P. L. M., whose rigs are virtually converted but not quite. Reviews soon. Meantime I want to note the stereo re-release of these recordings, each of which was reviewed at length at the time of its initial monophonic issue. I have said before and I repeat that opera in stereo makes more sense than anything else in stereo. Unlike the players in an orchestra, singing actors move about during a performance. They may cover more area than the average space between two loudspeakers, but in the reproduction left is left and right is right in fairly close ratio, so that the all-important illusion of theater is as nearly complete as one could expect to simulate in one's living room. The musical merits and demerits of these performances having been enumerated, it need only be said by way of recapitulation that all are good to excellent. Sound is first-class without exception. For me the outstanding production in this gala grouping is London's "*Nozze*". Such a marriage (no pun intended) of music and engineering is proof positive of stereo's appropriateness for stage works—and, incidentally, of London's long and until recently unquestioned leadership in this repertory. The only trouble with this is that London's monophonic recordings already were superb. (Pre-stereo, neither *ffrr* nor Mercury sound left much to be desired as a rule.) Put on, as I did, the monophonic "*Nozze*", and you will be impressed all over again. Go a step farther. Play it through stereo equipment. If you can tell the difference *at once*, obviously you will not be happy until you own this stereo version. But I am not so sure that you will be able to tell the difference. If you own stereo equipment but do *not* own the monophonic recording, the course is clear: buy it on stereo. If you own neither, the previous order of perfection will no doubt suffice. Still, it might be wise to get yourself a stereo cartridge as insurance against the day when such recordings as these might be available *only* on stereo—or in case you might decide to convert to stereo yourself when the budget permits. —J.L.

Gypsy Magic: Edi Csoka and his Gypsy Orchestra. Elektra Stereo 202X, \$5.95.

▲THIS record, played softly in the background while one eats by candlelight, might be useful in creating atmospheric dining. Listened to head-on, this kind of music can be pretty awful. The performances are certainly "lively"—full of slithery glissandi, excessive ritards and accelerations, and overly sudden crescendi and diminuendi. Stereo is very much apparent—separation is unusually wide. Otherwise, too, the sound is clean and undistorted. —P.C.P.

Music for Heavenly Bodies: Paul Tanner (electro-theremin) with an Orchestra conducted by André Montero. Omega Stereo, OS-4, \$5.95.

▲THE electro-theremin, according to the jacket notes, emits pure sine waves without any harmonics, thus making it an ideal instrument with which to test your equipment. Its advantage over ordinary (*sic*) theremins is its ability to play staccato notes. The selections include *Over the Rainbow*, *Sunrise Serenade*, *the Red Sea of Mars*, and *Up to Jupiter*. For the aficionado of sound effects this is highly recommended. —L.Z.

"My Fair Lady" and "Gigi" (Excerpts). Radiant Velvet Orchestra conducted from the piano by Caesar Giovannini. Concert Disc Stereo CS-23, \$6.95.

▲SUAIVITY characterizes these performances. The "*Fair Lady*" selections come off better than the "*Gigi*" montage, possibly because of their greater familiarity. This is one of the initial releases of a new label which is the disc outlet for Concertapes, long active in the stereo field. Fine, lush sound and quiet surfaces. —L.Z.

"South Pacific": Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians. Capitol Stereo ST-992, \$4.98.

▲WARING and his group run through the score with their familiar skill. The emphasis is on contrasting soloist against chorus, which in stereo proves to be extremely effective. On my pre-release pressing the excellent sound was marred by noisy, sputtering surfaces. —L.Z.

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When war with the Mother Country erupted, Franklin with all his diplomatic experience and continental *savoir faire* was the logical representative to send to France. It is almost impossible for us in twentieth-century America to realize the extent of the adulation which the French showered on Franklin. His experiments with electricity already had been translated and were well known. *Poor Richard* of the homely sayings spoke to the French as *Bonhomme Richard*. Plain people and sophisticated society alike bowed down to the learned patriarch and republican from the American Arcady. The fastidious French admired his prepossessing appearance, his wit, charm, candor, good nature, simple garb, and fur cap. They also liked his armonica.

Franklin played for his neighbors in Passy, a fashionable suburb of the French capital. A certain Mme. Brillon de Juzy, a favorite, was an accomplished musician. Boccherini had dedicated sonatas to her. Franklin, many years the lady's senior, wrote banteringly that he would wait for her in Paradise, where "I shall have plenty of time. . .to practice the armonica, and maybe I shall then be worthy of accompanying your pianoforte. Now and then we shall give little concerts. . ."

The captivating Mme. Brillon might promise Franklin a concert on earth where a friend "would play *God of Love* on the violin, I the march on the piano and you [Franklin] *Little Birds* on the armonica." But the delights of Paradise were enchanting to Franklin. "We shall eat Paradise apples roasted with butter and nutmeg," he rhapsodized, "and we shall feel sorry for those who are not dead."

The Davies sisters went on from Britain to the Continent, playing Paris, Florence, Milan, Vienna, and other music centers. It was not unusual to hear about the "new instrument (l'Armonica) invented by the celebrated Dr. Franklin." Among its hearers in Vienna was Marie Antoinette, the daughter of Empress Maria Theresa but not yet the ill-fated wife of the hapless Louis XVI of France. Marianne gave her lessons. Another con-

vert was Dr. Anton Mesmer, who gave *mesmerism* its name and who claimed he worked cures with the cosmic force of Animal Magnetism. (Medicine today says it was pure hypnotism.) Mesmer built an armonica of his own and used it in treating patients. When Vienna's outraged doctors had him expelled from the city for medical quackery, Mesmer headed for Paris—leaving behind the rich widow he had married, but taking his armonica!

Not the least of the notables were the Mozarts—Leopold and his son Wolfgang, the astonishing prodigy. Papa Mozart must have fingered Miss Davies' armonica, for he wrote in a letter that "Wolfgang too has played upon it". The name Mozart stirred as much fanfare throughout Europe as Franklin's. When the Agent from Pennsylvania was at work in London piecing together the first armonica, Mozart was a precocious celebrity of five in his home town of Salzburg. He had exhibited flashing musical talent and applied magic to the keyboard. He had memorized minuets on the clavier and was even writing a little music of his own.

An enterprising papa was readying Mozart for musical tours. Instant success close to home drove them greater distances. In critical Vienna the boy wonder, dressed "in the finest cloth, lilac-colored, the vest of silk of the same color, the coat and waistcoat embroidered with broad gold braid", enthralled his audiences. After many triumphs on the Continent and in Paris, the Mozarts sailed the English Channel to play at St. James Palace. Franklin meanwhile had gone back to America—it was 1765, the year of the infamous Stamp Act. But the same year found Franklin on the high seas, London-bound again. The two immortals, one an experienced diplomat of 59, the other a tot of nine resplendent with powdered wig and sword, were on English soil at the same time.

In eighteenth-century Europe the nobility patronized composers, fed them, clothed them, and supplied them with audiences. But it rarely overpaid them. Musicians in service were ranked with the serving class, as an accessory to a noble-

man's retinue. Often a player doubled as a valet. Once, when the moneyless Mozart tried to get himself hired into the service of the Archduke Ferdinand, the nobleman got pointed advice from his Empress Mother, Maria Theresa, who admonished: "I do not believe you have need of a composer or of useless persons."

To the nobles music may have been an elegance, but to the Mozarts it was bread and butter. Wolfgang embarked on tours to make money to support his father, mother, and sister. He was never to end that routine. His feats on the clavier and piano spellbound listeners. They gasped at his tricks, like playing on a keyboard covered with a cloth. His father wrote home; "God daily performs miracles with this child." Portraits were painted, engravings etched. A scientific examination of the boy's powers appeared in a professional journal when Mozart was fourteen. The stops on his itinerary read like a timetable: Frankfurt, Cologne, Bonn, Munich, Brussels, Paris, London, Vienna, Milan, Naples, Rome, Prague.

In this dizzy whirlwind Mozart also composed, perforce with incredible speed. He had written his first symphony at eight, his first opera at twelve. Over the years he poured out sonatas, symphonies, songs, chamber music, church compositions, operas. His wife Constanze was "not an intellectual", Mozart wrote a friend, "but has enough common sense to fulfill her duties as a wife and mother. . . She loves me and I love her truly—could I wish for a better wife?"

Mozart, like his music, exhibited bubbling spirits and good humor. He was always, at least on the surface, optimistic and quick to joke. But beneath this rippling mirth, suggests W. A. Turner, an undertow of melancholy swirled. Listeners say they hear dark passages underneath his sparkling melodies.

The regimen of composing and playing pushed on with ruthless pressure. In time, overwork weakened Mozart. Insecurity nagged at him. Debts pressed. He wrote Constanze that he wanted to finish a piece for the clockmaker "so that my dear wife may have a few ducats in

her hand". One of the world's richest geniuses wasn't good at making money!

In 1791 Mozart was in Vienna when another armonica player appeared on the scene. She was a visiting artist, a namesake of Franklin's English friend of some years before, a blind German girl named Marianna Kirchgessner. In spite of being sightless, or perhaps because she was, she became a virtuoso on the armonica—a later, improved model. Mozart, hearing Marianna, was touched and composed a piece for her which he called *Adagio and Rondo* (K.617). It was written for a quintet of instruments, with the main part given the armonica. The other instruments were flute, viola, oboe, and cello. Mozart also wrote a solo for the armonica, and Marianna played both compositions on a tour across Europe. Fittingly, her most spectacular successes occurred in England, birthplace of the instrument.

Thus Mozart carved his initials, so to speak, in Franklin's armonica. The greatest composer of the day paid tribute to the greatest statesman. The armonica remained popular for thirty or forty years, its favor gradually waning. In 1862 it was on display at the International Exhibition in London, and was described by the historian K. F. Pohl as "a now almost forgotten instrument".

Mozart did not live long after Marianna's Vienna performance. He was thirty-five and at the peak of productivity. But he was worn and without the will to live. The flavor of death, he told Constanze, was on his tongue. One day Count von Walsegg sent his man to commission Mozart to write a Requiem. Mozart, in his anguished mood, mistook the motive. He believed the "Mysterious Stranger" an agent from the other world, come to announce his time. Somberly, Mozart accepted the commission. He began work on the Requiem, thinking he was writing his own, but died before finishing it.

Franklin never heard the music Mozart wrote for his armonica. The year before, now eighty-four and full of honors, the great statesman-philosopher had shown the younger man how to trade his earthly garments for the mantle of immortality.

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Stereo Tapes

BARTÓK: *Four Dirges*; Isabelle Byman (piano). Stereo Age C-4, \$6.95.

▲STARK, somber listening, these early Bartók pieces, but quite effective. The performances are most sympathetic. A very, very slight wow was detectable in my review copy of this tape. Otherwise the piano sound is superb—as good as I have ever heard. —P.C.P.

●
RESPIGHI: *The Fountains of Rome*; *The Pines of Rome*; Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Columbia Stereo LMB-25, \$12.95.

▲THIS is the first Columbia stereo tape I have encountered, and it is in all respects a dazzler. Ormandy and his Philadelphians could do no better than they have here. Elegant ease and polish is manifest throughout. Both pieces are simply drenched in an atmospheric, shimmering iridescence. For my personal tastes, a more ideal pair of performances could hardly be imagined. The engineering, too, is superlative. Smooth, wide-range, and super-clear, the moderately close-in yet reverberant stereo has a decidedly noticeable absence of any hole-in-the-middle effect. All things taken into account, this is one of the most ravishing tapes ever released by anybody. —P.C.P.

●
SESSIONS: *Suite from "The Black Maskers"*; Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. Mercury Stereo MS5-16, \$8.95.

▲THIS piece, although grim and forbidding, is also highly dramatic and intense. The impact of the music is aided immensely by the performance at hand, which can be best characterized as expert.

With clean-cut, hard-driving playing by these dexterous and obviously sympathetic participants, the musical effect is stunning. Mercury's sound here is excellent; it is well-separated and very clear. The passage for organ and brass in the "Dirge" is a sonic spine chiller. —P.C.P.

●
Songs from Great Films: Herman Clebanoff and his Orchestra. Mercury MDS 2-35, \$12.95.

▲AN even dozen film themes of recent vintage are represented here. Clebanoff and his strings, augmented with percussion, manage to avoid the pitfalls of taste in such sentimental stuff as *Tammy*, *Gigi*, *Sayonara*, *Moulin rouge*, *Wild Is the Wind*, and *Raintree County*. The sumptuous stereo and sound are up to Mercury's highest standards. This tape incorporates what Mercury calls their "Sonic Signal". At the beginning there are balancing tones, between each selection a beep tone audible only on fast forward or rewind (for locating individual selections quickly), and, at the end, a continuous tone warning that the tape has ended. These work very well in practice. —L.Z.

●
Springtime: Richard Jones conducting the strings of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Capitol ZC-31, \$11.95.

▲TWELVE all-time popular standards, beautifully arranged and played. Rich, lush sound by Capitol's engineers complements the music on this easy-to-listen-to tape. The contents: *Here in My Arms*, *We Kiss in a Shadow*, *Deep Night*, *Fools Rush In*, *Laura*, *If You Are But a Dream*, *Day In—Day Out*, *In the Blue of Evening*, *In a Sentimental Mood*, *May Night*, *Autumn Leaves*, and *There's No You*. —L.Z.

SOUND IDEAS

An Equipment Review

By LARRY ZIDE

THE FUNCTION of any tone arm is to carry the cartridge across the surface of the record. In tracking the inward-spiraling groove of a microgroove record, the stylus must not be retarded by a stiffly moving arm. Freedom of motion must exist also in a vertical plane, to allow tracking of warped records. Very few discs are perfectly flat, and a vertically stiff arm would cause the stylus to dig into the surface. An additional function of the arm is in counterbalancing the weight of the cartridge so that the proper stylus pressure is achieved. This last is very important.

The ESL Series 1000 arm performs these functions extremely well. The arm is unique in that it can be statically balanced about its pivots for any cartridge weight. As a consequence, inertial resistance to motion is held to very low levels. Another advantage of a statically balanced arm is that even if the turntable is not perfectly level, the arm will not skid across the record. The Series 1000 tracked perfectly on a turntable tilted to 45 degrees from

level, a condition not likely to be met under home conditions. All vertical and horizontal movements are carried out through ball bearing pivots, providing a smooth, non-binding action.

The actual construction of the ESL arm is, as the illustration shows, that of a curved aluminum tube. This tube is terminated at one end with a heavy, chromium-plated sliding weight held in place by a set screw. At the other end is a removable plastic shell, into which the cartridge is mounted. With the cartridge in place, the weight at the rear is moved until it exactly counterbalances the cartridge. Then a spring system, which can be seen in the illustration behind the pivot points, is adjusted for the proper stylus pressure. The arm is so wired as to be readily usable with any stereo or monophonic cartridge. The cartridge shell, into which the cartridge must be properly wired, utilizes a common ground. Today there is no agreement in the industry as to the necessity of separate ground connections for the two channels of a stereo



ESL Series 1000 Gyro
Balance Stereo Arm.
\$34.95.



Changer Model, \$4.75.



Standard Model, \$5.75.

cartridge. With both separate amplifiers and combined stereo amps this reviewer has experienced no hum problems.

The ESL arm is shipped with a full-sized, punched mounting template. The hole in the template is slipped over the turntable center spindle and the template rotated until the arm illustration is in the desired mounting position. In that position a 7/8" hole is drilled as indicated. Around this the arm base is mounted by means of three small screws. The arm is then inserted into its base and locked in place at the proper height. A separate arm rest also is provided. The arm leads must then be attached to phono jacks for insertion into a preamplifier. For the information of those with space problems, the maximum clearance from front to rear of the arm is 12 5/16".

Test results and conclusion: With an ESL C-100 stereo cartridge mounted in the shell, no audible resonances of the arm could be detected. It is ruggedly built of sturdy metals except for the shell, arm base and arm rest, which are somewhat fragile plastic castings, and therefore should give long, trouble-free service. Highly recommended.

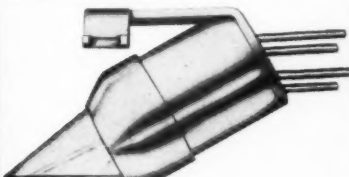
ESL Dust Bug

The Dust Bug is a device designed to clean and destaticize a record. It performs this job remarkably well. The unit is supplied in two models, the Standard for use with turntable installations and another for use with record changers. In operation, a soft nylon fiber brush (in front of a cylindrical plush pad) rides the record grooves, cleaning as it goes. A cleaning and destaticizing fluid is applied to the pad and the brush before every play. The Bug is then started in the opening grooves of a record as would be a tone arm, and the record is played in the usual manner. The results: quieter record surfaces. Incidentally, the amount of dirt the Bug gets out of (what appears to be) a clean record is frightening.

Conclusion: The ESL Dust Bug is somewhat of a nuisance to use, but it is a nuisance I would not be without. It is the only record-cleaning device I have yet come across that really works.

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THE BLUES, evolving from the same wellsprings of inspiration that produced the glorious Negro spirituals, are an equally distinctive *corpus* in our American musical heritage. Emerging as essentially a solo form (as opposed to the choral expression of the spirituals), the blues have profoundly influenced the development of our popular music—laying the very foundation, some say, for jazz, and certainly for much of what is today called gospel music. In the words of Alan Lomax, “the blues have, more than any other song-form, become the American song, much as *cante hondo* is the national song form of Spain or the *corrido* is the national ballad form of Mexico”.

Especially in view of the widespread popularity of blues and blues-type songs, therefore, it is remarkable to consider that Jerry Silverman's handsome collection is the first of its kind to be published. During his years of graduate study at New York University the editor, himself a folk singer and teacher, was struck by the absence of published anthologies. As he puts it, “I was plagued by this glaring and inexplicable sin of omission—so much so that I decided to do the job myself”.

In the extended introduction, Silverman discusses the musical and social implications of the blues form and presents interesting vignettes of some of the great blues singers: Blind Lemon Jefferson, Huddie Ledbetter (Leadbelly), Jimmie Rodgers, Woody Guthrie, and Josh White.

The songs themselves have guitar chords and piano accompaniments, and are rather loosely divided by subject matter into six chapters. The first, “Work and Prison Blues”, contains some of the most dramatic songs in the book, echoing the pain and hopeless longing of men who are chained in body, but not in spirit—songs

like *Been in the Pen So Long, Darlin'*, and *Told My Captain*.

The second section, “Hard Times Blues”, includes many satiric songs written by such as Baldwin Hawes, Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, and other folk artists. The fabled ability of the common man to smile in the face of the severest adversity finds expression in such pieces as *Arthritis Blues*, *The Boll Weevil Song*, and Jimmie Cox's famous *Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out*.

In the third group, “Jim Crow Blues”, we find many songs in which the casual, surface humor contrasts sharply with a bitter, deep-seated undercurrent of resentment at the senseless discrimination which disfigures so much of our country (“Michigan water tastes like sherry wine, Mississippi water tastes like turpentine”). Here again, the majority of the pieces bear composer credits: Big Bill Broonzy is represented by his ironic *Black, Brown and White Blues*; there are three songs by Leadbelly, and Silverman himself has provided the verses for three (and the music for one) of these dynamic ballads of protest.

The fourth chapter, “Lovin', Livin' and Leavin' Blues”, is also the longest one (obviously woman trouble bulks large among motives for singing the blues), with the twenty-seven songs ranging in mood from the suggestive humor of William Weldon's *Outskirts of Town* to the haunting tenderness of *Every Night When the Sun Goes In*. This section is notable also for the inclusion of one of the loveliest of all American folk songs, an Ohio River roustabout's lament called *Alberta, Let Your Hair Hang Low*.

A lighter mood predominates in the fifth section, “Brimstone Blues”, as one may surmise from such titles as *Draftee's Blues*, *Keep My Skillet Good and Greasy*, and *High Price Blues*, the last being a complaint of the 1940s which unfortunately has lost none of its timeliness. Also included in this group is the familiar and

(Continued on page 358)

Folk Blues: 110 American Folk Blues
*Compiled, Edited and Arranged for Voice,
Piano and Guitar, by Jerry Silverman.*
The Macmillan Company, \$6.95.

BOOK REVIEWS

Folk Music

By ROBERT SHERMAN

Music of Afghanistan and Iran: Recorded by J. C. and S. Lubchansky; Evergreen EVR-002, \$5.95.

▲THIS most interesting record introduces us to songs and instrumental rhythms of the various ethnic groups living today in Afghanistan. The music is basically Arabic in feeling, although one senses also the intermingling of Central Asian influences (one number, played on an instrument called the 'rebab', even sounds to my western ears surprisingly like Japanese koto music). Unfortunately, the usefulness of this otherwise excellent disc is curtailed by the unforgivable dearth of explanatory material: beyond some general historical background, and a description of music-making in an Asian teahouse, we are given virtually no specific information on the pieces. We are completely in the dark as to the meaning of the songs, or what kind of person the musician is; many of the unusual folk instruments heard here are nowhere mentioned in the brief liner notes, while the one instrument (a 'damboura') which is described is not identified on the record label, and consequently we have no way of knowing when it is being played. The quality of the sound reproduction—especially of the instrumental numbers—is remarkably good for a field recording.

●
Forbidden Island: Martin Denny and his group; Liberty LRP-3081, \$3.98.

▲THE recent flood of Hawaiian releases, most of which sport such mysterious titles as "Tabu", "Bwana" and "Exotica", continues unabated. "Forbidden Island" is quite typical of the crop—it contains a couple of good popular tunes (*March of the Siamese Children* and *Bali Ha'i*) and a batch of not-so-good popular tunes, all dressed up in such a fancy array of unusual sounds and odd instruments as to be almost unrecognizable. Highly recommended for the hi-fi addict who can't wait to test out his set for reception of conch shells, rattling gourds, and bongos.

●
Dances of the Moiseyev and Beryozka Companies: Monitor MF-311, \$4.98.

▲THIS delightful sampling of the musical repertoires of two celebrated Soviet ensembles is highlighted by *The Partisans* (that stunning cloak dance of the Moiseyevs) and the lilting *Beryozka Reel*, from which that company took its name. Don't expect the grand orchestral display that distinguished Epic's earlier release of Moiseyev dances (LC-3459)—everything here is played by accordionists from the respective companies (except two numbers which also feature a balalaika), and so the range of tonal color is necessarily quite limited. The performances themselves are exemplary, of course, and if you've already seen these wonderful dancers in action the disc will make a memorable souvenir.

●
On the Rocks: The Surfers; Hifirecord R-408, \$5.95.

▲THE Surfers are four mellow-voiced young fellows who accompany themselves on bass, guitar, and ukulele as they sing Hawaiian ballads in close harmony. Their material ranges from supposedly traditional airs to such Tin Pan Alley-inspired concoctions as *I Got Hooked at a Hukilau*, and the disc makes pleasantly innocuous, albeit totally undistinguished listening fare. Good sound.

●
Under Open Skies: John Raitt; Capitol T-1058, \$3.98.

▲LATE of "Carousel", "Pajama Game", and other musical comedy successes, Raitt turns his strong, limber voice here to a pleasing set of folk and folk-like ballads. With orchestral and choral backing, Raitt is at his best in the livelier, more vigorous numbers (*Sourwood Mountain*, *They Call the Wind Maria*, etc.), and only slightly less convincing in such simple tunes as *I Wonder As I Wander* and *Sweet Little Jesus Boy*. On the whole, an appealing, well-recorded album.

●
Leon Bibb Sings Folk Songs: Vanguard VRS-9041, \$4.98.

▲BIBB, who has already made several recordings under the name of Lee Charles, is heard in a most rewarding recital of American ballads, blues, and work songs. A certain constriction, a feeling of self-consciousness which was noticeable, for instance, in his *Riverside* album of *Negro Spirituals* (RLP 12-651) seems to have vanished entirely; Bibb's voice is more supple and relaxed, and his performances here have a freedom and persuasiveness

that make the songs spring vividly to life. Much credit for the success of this disc must go also to folksinger Milt Okun, who fashioned the surprisingly convincing orchestral and choral settings used in many of the numbers, and to Fred Hellerman, whose sensitive accompaniments indicate again that he is one of the top folk guitarists in the business. Highlights of the album are the lovely Creole ballad, *Poor Lolette*, and a thrilling Negro prison song, *Rocks and Gravel*, which is a masterful transcription of an actual work chant first recorded by Alan Lomax in 1947 at the Mississippi State Penitentiary. Bright, clean sound.

Folk Songs of Mexico: Alfonso Cruz Jimenez; Folkways FW-8727, \$5.95.

▲IN a brief autobiographical sketch, Alfonso Cruz Jimenez (who is totally blind) writes: "This has been my life, filled with suffering and surrounded by darkness. . . ." What a different impres-

sion one gets from his singing! Even though his dynamic range is quite limited, his tenor voice is light and cheerful, his performances gracefully lighthearted, even in tales of unrequited love. Providing his own guitar accompaniment, Señor Jimenez is heard in sixteen charming folk songs of his native Mexico, perhaps the best known of which are *Ay Zandunga* and the popular *Babalu*. The disc, recorded in Oaxaca, has full, well-rounded sonics (with some occasional distortion, however), and Folkways as usual has provided a booklet with complete Spanish texts and translations.

A Polish Wedding: The Polka Kings; Epic LN-3495, \$3.98.

▲THESE bouncy waltzes, obereks, and polkas, exuberantly performed by a typical Polish dance band, are high on light-hearted gaiety, rather low in musical interest and variety. Poles and polka-philosophes may have a ball; others had best maintain a respectful distance.

(Continued from page 356)

poignant ballad of the girl who went wrong in *The House of the Rising Sun*.

The sixth and final chapter contains samples of the "Talking Blues", a special type which amounts to informal, rhythmic speaking set to basic chord patterns on an accompanying instrument. Especially during the turbulent years of the 1930s and 1940s, the talking blues form was adopted by many folk composers who found in its free, improvisational structure the ideal medium for their caustic commentary on any and all contemporary problems from the dust bowl to crowded New York subways. Far and away the most successful writer of this type of song was Woody Guthrie, and of the seven examples included here five were composed by that wonderful Oklahoma balladeer.

On the whole, Silverman has compiled a rewarding and useful anthology. Performers will find it a wealth of fresh and challenging material: many of these blues were transcribed from rare old recordings and other generally unavailable sources, and many are published herewith for the first time anywhere. (If any criticism is due about the choice of selections, it is that there is perhaps an overbalance of modern "composed" blues at the expense of a wider representation of more genuinely traditional songs.) The

volume contains several helpful adjuncts, among these two pages of guitar chord patterns, an excellent bibliography, and a reasonably comprehensive discography of most of the songs.

It should be noted—and this in no way is intended to minimize the very real value of the collection to singers, teachers, students, and folk enthusiasts at large—that a certain basic knowledge of the blues form is a absolute prerequisite for full appreciation of this anthology. Perhaps more so than any other song form, the blues gains its power and expressiveness from the spontaneous and dynamic variations which the performer superimposes on the fundamental melodic and rhythmic patterns. Because formal notation cannot adapt itself to these highly personal variations (the piano accompaniments here, for instance, are quite properly notated in the blues idiom, but they sound stilted and synthetic when played exactly as written), the songs will be meaningful only to someone who is sufficiently familiar with the genre to be able to use the printed page as a point of departure rather than as a literal transcription of the music.

With this qualification, Silverman's book is highly recommended; it is surely a significant addition to the literature and the bibliography of folk music. —R.S.

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By JANET BOOKSPAN

Major Classics for Minors. Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (pianos). RCA Victor LBY-1016, \$1.98.

▲BEFORE a minute of the record has been played, Messrs. Whittemore and Lowe have established a personal, warm, friendly rapport with the listener. Known heretofore as one of the foremost duopiano teams, they reveal in this presentation unsuspected talents as teachers. Their approach is casual, unpretentious, and meaningful to the young mind. (For instance, they introduce Bach's *Siciliana* by mentioning that it was composed when George Washington was a boy.) Included among the selections which they play are such attractive, easily assimilated pieces as Beethoven's *Minuet in G*, No. 2; Schumann's *Traumeri*; Schubert's *Marche militaire*; excerpts from Haydn's "Surprise" Symphony (No. 94 in G) and Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23. For a child in the 8 to 10 age group, this record could well serve as a potent stimulus to a lasting interest in good music.

Burl Ives Sings Songs for All Ages. Columbia CL-980, \$3.98.

▲TO me, Burl Ives as a singer of songs for children is the personification of a favorite uncle whose visits are always great occasions and full of jolly surprises. His style of presentation is immediately winning, his good spirits are infectious, his characterizations in each of the songs is just right, his arrangements are marked by a bounce and sparkle. The orchestrations, replete with humorous instrumental

effects as well as appropriate noises from the sound effects department, are delightful. Included on this disc are such favorites as: *The Lollipop Tree*, *The Little Engine That Could*, *The Little White Duck*, *The Donut Song* and a group of Mother Goose Songs. Though this disc is reviewed in a children's column, Columbia is right in titling it "Burl Ives Sings For All Ages."

●
"Now We Know" Series (Songs to Learn By): Tom Glazer and Paul Tripp with Orchestra and Chorus. Columbia CL-670, \$3.98.

▲DO you know *Why Are Stars of Different Colors?*; *Do Animals Talk to One Another?*; *What Makes the Weather?*; *Where Does the Sun Go at Night?* The "Now We Know" series gives basic answers to these and many other practical questions about the world we live in. The songs are "not designed to tell all there is to know about a subject, but rather to give some vital facts and ideas and to stimulate further exploration". At times, the music gets in the way of the message in the lyric, and the material goes by too quickly to be absorbed on first hearing. However, the bright tunes, the catchy accompaniments which usually capture the mood appropriate to the subject matter of each song, and the narrators' straightforward delivery help this record "wear well" through the many times it will be played again. These pieces serve as excellent teaching devices. It is suggested for children of 5 years and up; some of the allusions in the lyrics (for example: "Hi-ho Magellan-o, we know the world is round!") are ambitious for an 8-year-old to comprehend readily, though *How Many Colors Are In the Rainbow?* is especially good for the younger listener. The disc is enclosed in a colorful jacket on which each of the song titles is illustrated.

●
Mother Goose For the Swing Set: Buddy Weed and his Playground Pals. RCA Victor LBY-1010, \$1.98.

▲HERE is a novel approach to the Mother Goose stories, complete with reso-

Here is our first "Children's Corner". This new department will appear at intervals henceforth. Janet Bookspan's reviews have the authority of one who has two children of her own. She has worked in stage and television productions for children and toured the United States with the Matinee Opera's "Hansel and Gretel"—as Hansel. At home, she is Mrs. Martin Bookspan, wife of the Director of Recorded Music at New York's Station WQXR.

lutions to the stories the nursery rhymes never had. A jazz combo takes off with George Simon's (the jazz critic) "further" adventures of our friends in rhyme. The beat will catch the child's interest, and the treatment is fine for those who go for simple jazz. This puts Mother Goose in modern dress, all right, but I'm still not sure the new styles are that flattering.

■
Over 40 of the World's Greatest Children's Songs sung by Bob Hastings with Orchestra. RCA Victor LBY-1017, \$1.98.

▲JUST what the title promises, and a successful presentation. Hastings has a bright, ingratiating personality. He sings the songs with a naive charm and easily communicates to the Nursery Set. His delivery of each song pierces to the core of its content. In *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*, he first adopts the twang of an old farmer, then he imitates the noises of all the animals, and as the narrative unfolds he accelerates the tempo until, at the end, it's an uninhibited romp which generates

its own excitement. There is a lot of material on this disc, and this record, as any other 12" LP of children's songs, has to be taken in doses proportionate to the individual child's span of concentration. A song book is included in the package for those who can read the words while they sing along.

●
Humpty Dumpty's Album For Little Children: Bud Collyer with Marty Gold and his Orchestra. RCA Victor LBY-1015, \$1.98.

▲HERE'S a fine "stay-indoors day" companion. Bud Collyer entertains with stories, games and songs taken from *Humpty Dumpty's Magazine*. Collyer holds attention by changing his pace; he sustains interest by not staying too long in any one area, but by moving from songs that give practical suggestions for good behavior, to activity games to participation games using numbers, names, letters of the alphabet, etc. Entertaining and instructive, and most important of all—fun!

A movie souvenir for children of all ages

Fantasia; Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. Disney-Land Stereo set WDX-101, six sides, \$14.94.

▲AT the time, which was two decades ago, all the music critics were violent in their condemnation of "Fantasia". Because a music critic's job is to keep a noble art noble, it is easy enough to see why none of them had a good word to say for this masterpiece of cinema. The "Pastoral" Symphony is hideously truncated. With the composer's permission, be it noted, *The Rite of Spring* is virtually rewritten. And the Toccata and Fugue in D minor and Schubert's *Ave Maria* are inflated far beyond their original dimensions. At this safe distance in time, however, a case can be made for the proposition that the contemporary critics were not entirely justified in their disapproval. Not that they were wrong to wince at the way "Stoky" (and more especially commentator Deems Taylor) traduced Euterpe at every turn. But was this film an assignment for the music critics in the first place? In retrospect, I am inclined to think not, for the same reason that the drama critics should not have been sent to cover Olivier's filmed "Hamlet" or,

more recently, that the dance critics should not have been assigned the Rank documentary featuring the Bolshoi company. The motion picture is not so autonomous a form that it can ignore established criteria when it enlists collaboration, to be sure. Still, great ballet music is not always great music *per se*, either. Let us agree, then, that Stokowski's lapses from good taste in his performances for "Fantasia" were quite beyond forgiveness. Let us agree that the *Danse arabe* is not about goldfish and that the *Dance of the Hours* is not about ostriches and hippopotami. But this extraordinary film achievement *did* introduce good music to millions. It *did* get them whistling Beethoven. And it *did* at least expose them to the elder Bach. Thumbing through the brochure that is bound into this album I cannot but smile at the memory of Mickey Mouse as *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, and certainly the *Night on Bald Mountain* was terrifying in its verisimilitude. And through all the sonic fog on these dated dubbings the sheer tonal beauty of everything remains a cause for wonder. In short, not for purists or sound addicts, but children of all ages will be delighted. —J.L.

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THE MONTH'S JAZZ

By MARTIN WILLIAMS

Modern Jazz Concert. Columbia WL-127, \$4.98.

▲THE title aside, these are the six compositions done for the Brandeis University 1957 Festival of the Arts. The comments which follow will have to beg the whole question as to just what relationship the best jazz composer-arrangers (Morton, Redman, Henderson, Ellington to begin with) set up between their writing and both improvisation and specific improvisers—a question I have never seen well discussed—because I think that an understanding of that problem and their solutions will lead to a solution of the problems that such scores as these pose; that is, I do not think that one can approach it from the other, “classical”, end. I disqualify myself from a discussion of Milton Babbitt’s *All Set*. It is perhaps a comment on the set as a whole that the most successful piece is George Russell’s *All About Rosie*, for what Russell has done is write a score for jazz group and soloists in three strict jazz tempos—what the jazz arranger does, but no more. I question whether the second slow part really has “the feel of the blues” or just plenty of blues devices and the third section uses a fast tempo that got the best of the improvisers. However, Bill Evans is really good therein. Jimmy Giuffrè’s *Suspensions* is entirely compositional, is very like some of his other work, has as much reference to the music of the hills and plains as to jazz, and is an exposition of a medium of playing, I think, rather than a work. Charles Mingus’s *Revelations* (first movement) is clearly best when it is most like his quintet and sextet jazz and otherwise quite derivative and surface. Tempo again got the upper hand in Harold Shapero’s *On Green Mountain*, which based improvisational sections on a cha-

conne after Monteverdi—a strange choice. In Gunther Schuller’s *Transformation*, written “classical” material is gradually (but never entirely) replaced by improvised blues. Here the soloists failed, I think, and the performance is, in effect, a prelude of intentions to music unplayed. Some questions remain: isn’t most of this really concert music (some of it “light”) which intends to use improvisation because of what jazzmen have achieved? And if it is, is such music not the concert musician’s problem and not the jazzman’s? And does such activity not put jazz (however respectfully treated) in the position being *used* (even perhaps used *up*) by another artistic tradition?

●
Duke Ellington: *At The Cotton Club.* RCA Camden CAL-459, \$1.98.

▲THE selections date from 1929-1931. There is good Ellington in *Ring Dem Bells*, *Shout 'Em Aunt Tillie*, and *Saratoga Swing*, and there is also his first major “extended” composition, *Creole Rhapsody*—but in an inferior padded orchestration. However, any work by a figure of Ellington’s stature is instructive and valuable. The set also announces that Camden’s jazz program, which heretofore has been careless and cursory, may be undertaking the job it should have been doing.

●
Mal Waldron: *Mal 3.* Prestige 8201, \$4.98.

▲EASILY Waldron’s best LP. Although his accompaniments continue to have a certain chopiness, Waldron’s piano solos are firmly articulated and given excellent rhythmic organization and developments. Some of the borrowed classicisms in the scoring don’t quite come off, (except on a very interesting *Tension*). Mrs. Waldron’s vocal “effects” have more honest charm than skill, and flutist Eric Dixon’s lines

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are sometimes trite. But trumpeter Art Farmer again shows what a superb jazz musician he has become and the pizzicato cello solos of newcomer Carlo Scott are inventive and, as Roy Eldridge once put it so well, "tell a story".

■
Duke Ellington's Spacemen. Columbia CL-1198, \$3.98.

▲LACKING both two of the orchestra's major instrumentalists (Johnny Hodges and Harry Carney) and the unique approach that Ellington used to take to work with his small groups in the thirties and forties, and having only one really good solo (Clark Terry's on *Take The "A" Train*) and some (for him) strangely out-of-context drumming by Sam Woodyard, this amounts to a lower-drawer Ellington played by a truncated version of his big band.

■
Julian Adderley: *Portrait of Cannonball.* Riverside 12-269, \$4.98.

▲THIS recital makes it clear that Adderley is the first altoist since Parker (the cool players aside) to break away from a direct debt to the revolutionary modernist. His playing on the recent "New Wine Old Bottles" (World Pacific) announced a coming of age which I think is reflected here only on *Nardis*.

■
Thelonious Monk: *Thelonious In Action.* Riverside 12-262, \$4.98.

Clark Terry and Thelonious Monk: *In Orbit.* Riverside 12-271, \$4.98.

▲THE former set, recorded in a New York bar, is disappointing for long, frequently disorganized solos by Johnny Griffin's tenor which do not seem to apprehend the nature of Monk's music very well. It does include two new Monk pieces, *Light Blue* and an especially good *Coming on the Hudson*. The latter set, witty, sardonic, full of surprises, has hardly a dull moment (unless it is the drum solo on *Let's Cool One* which is spoiled only by a strangely slow initial tempo), and the improvised interplay of ideas and motifs between Terry and Monk is certainly something to hear.

■
Matty Matlock: *Pete Kelly Lets His Hair Down.* Warner Brothers 1217, \$3.98.

▲KELLY is a character out of the mind of Jack "S'want-the-facts-ma'am" Webb, who is supposed to lead a band in Kansas City in the thirties but whose music (provided by a nucleus of studio ex-Bob Crosbyites and their friends) comes out Winnetka, 1939. This time around they have avoided the sometimes tired "Dixieland" for a series of blues solos, beautifully recorded, slow on one side, just a bit

faster but more rhythmic on the other. Several men fall into disorganization or (surprising, especially for Eddie Miller and Matlock) sentimentality. But Moe Schneider contributes two excellent trombone solos which avoid either fault splendidly.

■
The Mastersounds: *Kismet.* World Pacific WP-1243, \$3.98.

▲ALTHOUGH this group is not really imitative, its general approach is apparently borrowed from The Modern Jazz Quartet. But the MJQ is, first of all, a collection of excellent players and soloists. These men are not yet (or have not yet become) that. Performances like *Ninevah*, *Baubles, Bangles, and (What'sis)* do have an admirable rhythmic life and movement, but the matter rests there.

■
Brownie McGhee: *Back Country Blues.* Savoy MG-14019, \$4.98.

▲MOST of the blues themselves may be "back country", and Sonny Terry's wailing harmonica (on eight of the twelve tracks) is. But McGhee's singing, although it happily avoids the Josh White-ish cabaret act he has sometimes come close to, is decidedly urban. The result is that the chief attractions, aside from the almost rich variety of blues forms and melodies present, are the two relatively sophisticated "love" narratives (*Diamond Ring* and *Love's A Disease*) which show McGhee's voice and manner at its best.

■
The Song of Songs: Audio Fidelity AFLP-1888, \$5.95.

Jazz Canto: World Pacific WP-1244, \$4.98.

▲WHEN the already silly alliance of poetry-and-jazz reaches the point represented on the former release, wherein some competent jazz-style playing is faded up and under a morning-radio reading of Solomon's "Song" (somebody must have heard it was pretty hot stuff—and from the Bible too!), the end, one hopes, must be near. On the other collection, the reading ranges from ham (John Carradine) through imitative (Ben Wright for Dylan Thomas) and straightforward (Bob Dorough and Hoagy Carmichael) to some beautiful acting (Roy Glenn on Philip Whalen's "Big High Song For Somebody"). The music goes from some of Fred Katz's pretentious borrowings from modern classicists, through tepid, to a couple of dubbed-in things by Gerry Mulligan and Chico Hamilton already in the company's catalogue. Since Whalen's poem and three by Langston Hughes use conventions from the folk and blues poems which jazz has in its background, the alliance there is less disturbing. Otherwise, ain't jazz got enough trouble already?

Unlikely Corners

WHY NOT LOOK below the surface occasionally and find out what it is in the direct appeal of the popular tune which makes the audience go home whistling; to see if there is not some artistic impulse hidden in unlikely corners. . . .

—Ralph Vaughan Williams

PERSONALITY is the keynote this month. In **Give The Lady What She Wants** we have the beautiful Lena Horne holding forth with the aid of husband Lennie Hayton's orchestra. I am frankly not in her camp. Miss Horne's aggressive sensuality may please her fans (a devoted and good-sized crew), but I don't think she does much for songs. The same problem obtains with her arrangements, in this case by Hayton and Ralph Burns, which become overbearing and unpleasant. Not always, of course. Miss Horne can sing quite beautifully when she wishes, as she does here in *Speak Low!* She can be honestly exciting, too, as in the Hugh Martin-Ralph Blane *Love*. But "what the lady wants" becomes wearisome here and hardly worth working so hard for. Whatever my personal opinion, however, her latest RCA Victor album (LPM-1979) is worthy of notice because Miss Horne is a stylist of great distinction even if you disagree with her approach.

Possibly the same could be said for Fanny Brice, who has been given respectful treatment in **The Fanny Brice Story** (M-G-M E-3704) in the person and impersonation of Kaye Ballard, a comedienne of great gifts. It seemed to me that the comedy of Fanny Brice was pretty much a local thing and that some of her allusions would be lost upon any but the Second Avenue theater crowd. Still, she sang some pretty good songs of, as they say, a day gone by. Here are *Rose of Washington Square*, *Song of the Sewing Machine*, *Second Hand Rose*, and of course, the inevitable *My Man*. Miss Ballard sings with greater quality than I recall Miss Brice had, and she does it with a fine flair which combines comedy with pathos, as did Miss Brice. For authen-

ticity's sake Miss Ballard sings also in dialect now and then, which frankly, made me squirm a bit.

Peggy Lee, in **Things Are Swingin'** (Capitol T-1049), sings in her own style, and even while she is "hip" (I think that's the expression; I mean when she sings fast and meanders around the tune), she is not too far off. Her tendency is to sing consistently (or it seems) at an "up" tempo; and her lyric delivery, like Miss Horne's, seems to be sexy. Miss Lee, though, sings with a fine feeling for the beat. She also sings a couple of good songs, among them *Alone Together* (Schwartz-Dietz), *You're Mine You*, and the old timer, *You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me*, along with some pretty undistinguished fare.

Personality helps to make the score of **Damn Yankees** (RCA Victor LOC-1047) a rather agreeable one. With Gwen Verdon singing *Lola*, or joining Tab Hunter in *Two Lost Souls*, the album reaches its high points. I really can't make up my mind about *Goodbye, Old Girl*. While its melody is rather memorable, the lyrics and the idea are a little sticky. So is the song about an empty chair. Richard Adler and Jerry Ross really had discovered the formula for turning out hit shows; the tragic, untimely death of Ross ended a very promising partnership.

There seems to be no end of Sinatra records. RCA has come out with **We 3** (LPM-1632), consisting of reissues from the days when Sinatra sang with the Dorsey band, and had begun to make his mark with the backing of the orchestra of Axel Stordahl. These sides go back to just before the bobby soxers busted loose. Included in the album are such favorites

of the time as *The Lamplighter's Serenade*, *I'll Be Seeing You*, *Fools Rush In*, *It Started All Over Again*, and *The Night We Called it a Day*. This is for serious collectors of Sinatra.

Bobby Short is an engaging specialist in some of the lesser known songs of our better composers. In his new album, **Sing Me A Swing Song** (Atlantic 1285), he emphasizes rhythm numbers with an occasional breather by way of a ballad. Included are four Cole Porter songs, *It's Bad For Me*, *From Now On*, *For No Rhyme or Reason*, and *Ace in the Hole*. Also there is a rarely sung Rodgers and Hart song, *How Can I Forget?*, as well as a fine Burton Lane-E.Y. Harburg number, *Don't Let It Get You Down*. There is an interesting Willard Robison—Jo Trent song, *Wake Up, Chillun, Wake Up*. There is, too, the amusing spoof, *Lydia the Tattooed Lady*, a product of the Harold Arlen-E.Y. Harburg collaboration (originally sung by Groucho Marx). Strangely, the liner notes and the label credit the song to Miklós Rózsa—who merely wrote the background music for a film titled *Lydia*. The liner notes consist of effusions about Short, who needs no such introduction. There is no information about the show sources (which would be useful) except for the misinformation about the Arlen-Harburg song. Not terribly important, but surprising, considering the song-wise people connected with the making of the album. Bobby Short might be described as the possessor of a small but most pleasing voice who sings with obvious relish; he also sometimes supplies his own piano accompaniment. His other Atlantic albums are worth investigating also if you are interested in off-beat songs.

Hugh Shannon is another specialist in the unusual. Like Short he sings in the smarter night clubs here and abroad, but unlike Short he has a rather husky voice of limited range and breath control. He, too, has his fans who swear by him. I don't. I defend his right to unearth neglected songs, but I'm not sure all should be rediscovered, and I just do not take to the Shannon voice. (I must admit it wore better the second time around). For the Harlequin label Shannon has recorded an album titled **Disgustingly Rich** (HQ-703), the title song being by Rodgers and Hart (from "Higher and Higher"). This strikes the appropriately smart (or snobbish, if you prefer) note of the album. Here is our old standby, Cole Porter, represented by *Ace in the Hole* and *The Great Indoors*; Jimmie McHugh and Ted Koehler contribute *I'm Shooting High*, and Dick Lewine and Ted Fetter furnish *Home by the Sea* (written for a revue). To me the highlight of the album

is the Gershwin song, *I Was So Young, You Were So Beautiful* (lyrics by Irving Caesar and Al Bryan, from "Good Morning, Judge", 1919) written around the time the composer was twenty. It's still a lovely melody. At the moment, this is the only recording of this song.

20th Fox, a new company, has just released a two-record set devoted to **Glenn Miller and his Orchestra** (TCF-100-2), comprised of material taken from the sound tracks of the films in which the Miller band appeared in 1941-42. The album contains some of the usual Miller standards (*In the Mood*, *Serenade in Blue*, *Moonlight Serenade*, *Chattanooga Choo-Choo*) and others like *It Happened in Sun Valley*, *You Say the Sweetest Things Baby* (a rare Miller sextet), and *Boom Shot*, all excellently recorded on film and now available for the first time on disc.

Some straightforward singing may be heard in Guy Mitchell's **A Guy in Love** (Columbia CL-1155), which to me is attractive mainly because of the presence of such old Crosby songs as *The Moon Got In My Eyes*, *So Do I*, *Pennies from Heaven*, and *The East Side of Heaven*. The first are Arthur Johnston (music) and Johnny Burke (lyrics) songs; the last is by Burke and Jimmy Monaco. Also sung are *East of the Sun*, *The Singing Hills*, and other such outdoorsy fare.

An almost alarming trend of late has been for dramatic actors who generally, like the rest of us, confine their singing to the shower—and with as good reason—to record their voices raised in uncertain song. Not that they are all bad, but it is obvious that they are not singers. Well, on second thought they sing as well as some who are officially called singers.

Anyway, for your information Jack Lemmon does rather well in **A Twist of Lemmon** (Epic LN-3491) singing and playing the piano as well with near professionalism. In **Warm And Easy** (Liberty LPR-3074) Jeff Chandler breathes his way through a rather distinguished collection of songs including Berlin's *I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm*, Van Heusen and Burke's *It Could Happen To You*, and an old timer by Mack Gordon and Harry Revel, *Stay as Sweet as You Are*. Each side contains also a composition by Chandler. No greater ability is displayed by Tony Perkins in **From My Heart** (Victor LPM-1679), though he manages to sound less nasal than Chandler and much more affecting. Still, there must be any number of fine singers who have yet to be recorded, and who may not be eating so regularly as the most successful Messrs. Lemmon, Chandler, and Perkins. Back to the hills of Beverly, boys.

To reinstate your faith in Hollywood I might mention that some film scores of

stature have recently come along. Unlike most, they stand up to listening without the visual aid of the film. Elmer Bernstein's *God's Little Acre* (United Artists UAL-40002) presents this best of the new film music in a characteristic Bernstein score using jazz, folk music, and modern music, all skillfully and with brilliant

effect. Jerome Moross supplied the sound track music for *The Big Country* (United Artists UAL-40004), and he, too, has come up with some original music for a change. The respective composers conduct their own music on these records, as an added touch. There may be a chance for movie music after all.

—E. J.

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